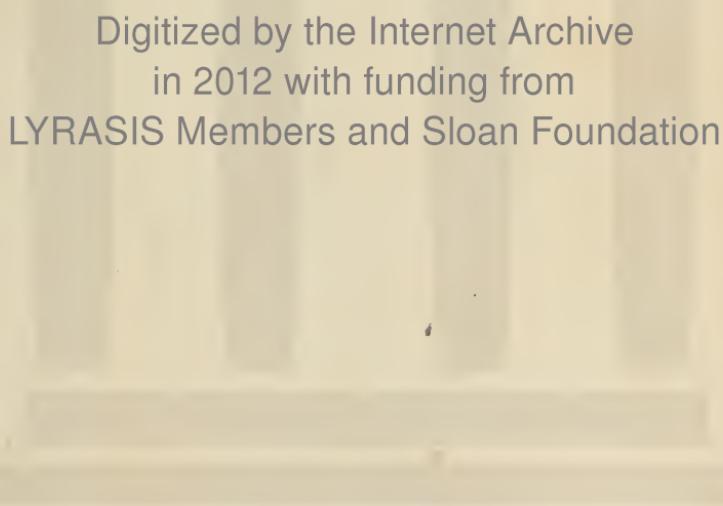


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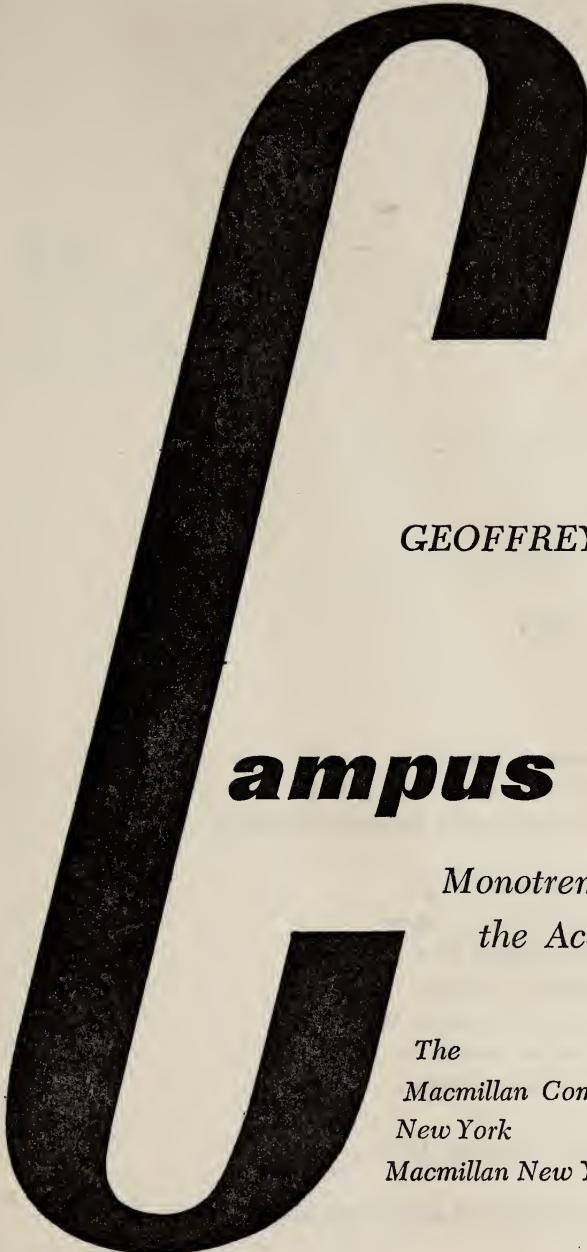
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The Asphalt Campus



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GEOFFREY WAGNER
62-21205

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*Monotremata of
the Academe*

*The
Macmillan Company,
New York
Macmillan New York, London*

~~PASTIME
COLLECTION~~

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To

The Student whose paper on the Bible
contained the following:

“AND THE LORD RAINED
SODIUM AND GOMORRAH ON
THE CITIES OF THE PLAIN”

this book is imperfectly dedicated.



Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?

T. S. Eliot, *Two Choruses from "The Rock."*

Truth is replaced by Useful Knowledge.

W. H. Auden, *Under Which Lyre.*

Education in the United States is a passion and a paradox. Millions want it and commend it, and are busy about it, at the same time as they are willing to degrade it by trying to get it free of charge and free of work. Education with us has managed to reconcile the contradictory extremes of being a duty and a diversion, and to elude intellectual control so completely that it can become an empty ritual without arousing protest.

Jacques Barzun, *The House of Intellect.*

One

The doctor contained his patience in the traffic hiving for the George Washington Bridge. A man of distinguished bearing behind the wheel, he enjoyed the animal thrust of his trusted Oldsmobile. For a poised fraction of time his eyes flicked to his watch, a paring of mellow shadow, no more, on the still tanned wrist. Eight forty-three. He should be into Manhattan well before the hour.

What dry autumnal countryside there was, visible between the serialized split-levels here, slipped past his window like the flicker of an undone film. With the mildest contusion of tires he moved into his lane, picking up speed a little, ready to turn off into Grand Boulevard with maximum efficiency. It was the second day of term at Lincoln College and Dr. Orrin Bunch had not been known to be late for a class in twenty-seven years.

Easing past a convertible he leaned forward and switched on the radio. Music came through. He thought of his pleasant summer in Europe, and he thought of the tense semester to come. He would raise the matter at the first meeting in October. An air-horn sounded behind. The doctor frowned. Raising his eyes he saw a big Buick, a begoggled boy at its helm. The automobile, one of the new Minotaurs, began to slide past his left. Dr. Bunch did not normally care to be overhauled but this time the driver's friendly signals held back the strong foot that could so

easily mash a pedal into its foam-rubber mat. The Buick glided by, the boy shouting, "Hi, Professor, have a good summer?"

Dr. Bunch did not return the greeting. His eyes continued to gaze keenly down the graded lines, alert to possibilities. Doubtless a former student. Eight forty-seven. Name, name? The doctor did not generally forget a face and he remembered names. Ira, Ira. A gentle youth who used to come in smelling of bananas, with too much talc on his jaw. The second name momentarily eluded him, however. It could hardly do so for long, although nomenclature at Lincoln certainly presented special problems. Mentally, the professor's predatory memory scanned past class rolls as the Buick bounded ahead—Graw, Weiss, Koundos, Yutman. Ira sounded right with none of them. Ira Prisciamondoro, Business English 9. Not him, reflected the professor, a look of distaste crossing his patrician features at the memory of emerging from a brackish sea on a city beach some years ago, to be accosted by a disgustingly hirsute student, wearing some sateen codpiece, who had sawed the air with his fists, crying at him, "What wuz the cream on dat garbage you give me las' term, Perfessor?" That Hercules, seen instantly off, had been referring to the plus sign Dr. Bunch had had the grace to embellish his D with, a D for total incompetence in putting the English language together in any manner or means whatever. The doctor's jaw set. Why, he recalled, the injured youth had even taken his revenge by conferring with a classmate on the sands, an orange-bedecked lout, 220 pounds of solid muscle including his head, who was working out the summer as bored lifeguard, and who thereafter blew a whistle on the well-set professor whenever he ventured anywhere near the surf. Business English, indeed.

The Buick blazed left, under an amber light, and Dr. Bunch was suddenly rewarded. Back of the head. That lad in Intro 2 who used to keep hitching at his prayer-cap, every now and then throwing up at his instructor the gaze of a dying guardsman in a poor Crimean War print. Ira Stern. How could he have forgotten!

Eight fifty-one. At the stoplight, now gone red, the professor toyed with the dial-knob. Time for a dip before that first English 1. ". . . from TNTC, the clash of swords, while back at old Elsinore loyal Horatio. . . ." The voice hung in limbo above the stirring engines. The doctor snapped off. Hah! Elementary composition, forsooth. Putting illiterate paranoiacs of precision on the threshold of some form of consciousness. Ira Stern. Evidence of an inner life. He shouldn't have forgotten. Memory slipping slightly? After all, there were New York painters much praised named Bugzester, Utter and Kline, not to mention evidently non-pseudonymous literary critics around seriously called Podhoretz, and Mudrick, and Snodgrass.

At nine oh three, as predicted, the crenellated Bell Tower of Jackson Hall hove into view. Then the even more medieval structures on the campus somewhat north. It all looked much the same, the streets as disreputable, their denizens as frantic. Already, as the doctor eased his powerful roadster toward the fake moat, he could see in the lines of parked autos the ranked silhouettes of technical students, deep in their Calculus already.

"Hey, fellah." A conspicuously armed individual in a blue uniform blocked the path over the drawbridge. "No *par-kin*."

"Faculty." The doctor made an impatient gesture. "Staff," he translated briskly.

The Burns Guard strolled slowly forward, talking to a buddy over his shoulder. Again the professor contained his impatience. Nine fourteen. It'd have to be only twenty lengths.

"What's your trouble?"

"Bunch. English Department."

"Yeah?" The guard was still grinning back at his comrade inside the glass cubicle over the moat. He glanced curiously in the Olds. "Nice car you got there, bud."

"Bunch," repeated the professor quietly, fingering the steering rim. He pointed to his parking ticket, signed Elmer Pin Dean, stuck on the windshield. But the guard was paying little attention. Leaning on the outside of the door he was grinning more and more

widely at the professor, concluding with what seemed to be a wink.

“You don’t say.”

The doctor ticked. He drew out of his billfold a cellophane-faced identity card, on which his photograph had been affixed, and stamped PROPERTY OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK. The guard waved him through. With a slight squelch he swung into his parking place beside the NROTC drillground, got out and made through the throngs of students to Calhoun Hall.

There he discovered the usual cattle-car shove around the elevator and nipped speedily up the iron flights by foot. The Department doors were already seething with members of the faculty felicitating themselves after summers spent, chiefly, out of town or overseas. Eeling efficiently toward his mailbox, even Dr. Bunch was unable, however, to avoid the bug-shaped oldster in Bierstube tweeds who strutted with outstretched hand and whom, as a leading D. H. Lawrence light, everyone called by the well-known nickname.

“Christamighty, Orrin,” Lorenzo roared in inimitable staccato. “Good to see you back. Looking great. Yes, grand, thanks. All over New Mexico. Never seen anything like it. Harry furious. Well, I mean to say.” He ran a thumb through rabbity locks and clamped down hard on his broken pipe. “Crossed paths an’ cold shoulders you might say, ha! ha!”

The doctor disengaged himself, avoided the Old Norse expert, and threw a smile at R. J. C. Phipps who, despite the somewhat inclement weather, still sported summer plumage, a suit of dark brown silk that looked as if it had been cut many years ago in Singapore. Dr. Bunch grabbed his mail and got out. Nine twenty-eight. He’d have to hurry some.

As he swung back across the crowded campus, composition handbook under one arm, he scanned what he had. Apart from the multiple publishers’ circulars, there was nothing much, beyond the equally customary Gladberg offprint, this time a dissection of a South African poet who wrote principally in Xhosa, so

it seemed. Dr. Bunch fanned the IBM cards like a hand in bridge —5, 5, 5, 5, 7, 5. Everywhere the ubiquitous 5, designating the Lincoln Engineering student and meaning, in practice, a sentence of frank philistinism for another term for the teacher concerned, of exhausted classes striving to sleep, and slide rules crackling at the back directly any poetry ("junk") was read. Dr. Bunch's steps did not waver in its well-directed course. Already he had memorized a number of the glimpsed names—Drosa, Edward, for instance, and Blass, Gerald, and Lester, Carol. The last an uncommon moniker at Lincoln. Nine thirty-two. Orrin Bunch was ready for the new crash science programs, all right.

The surface of the Lincoln campus was not a distinguished one, even by city college standards. Outside Weintroub Student Center groups of students were talking, smoking, shooting crap, or solving those first brain-cracking equations given to them by instructors frantically endeavoring to thin huge classes by a little early failure. Few paid any attention to the almost bizarrely grand-seigneurial professor threading through their ranks, for in order to reach the pool in which he took his daily dip he was compelled to penetrate into the very bowels of the institution. Against the maroon brick he cursorily observed the first notices of the sundry student clubs. The college boasted endless extra-curricular activities and the learned doctor was glad to note, for instance, that one of the Sociology organizations was to offer "Fundamentals of Personal Defense Activities" (supplemental to Hygiene 47.2), while the Chess Club promised an introductory lecture on "The Dilemmas of Mating." The Poetry Society was gloating over a future meeting destined to hear Mankurian Held, a "capacity" poet and college alumnus who had just returned from a Tibetan monastery. Students for a Sane Nuclear Policy were much in evidence. An Eco "round-table debate" on PREPARE TO MEET THY BOOM! was also forthcoming, but the busy professor could not linger now to study such offerings. He had time for ten lengths before his class and that was strictly all.

The entrance to the Lincoln underground was not by key, but

all thereafter was. So characteristic was it of the college, in fact, to keep fast its doors that the average teacher's key ring came to weigh like a dumbbell. At the end of the term each key had to be turned in to the Negress clerks of the Maintenance Department who reissued them, *on cash deposit*, on later need. An old hand at such administrative tergiversations, Dr. Bunch had drawn up his the day before school and he expertly fingered the correct steely shafts now.

Already his path was sadly impeded. These subterranean passageways seethed with slews of students, for there were labs down here and much arcane equipment painted ELEC ENG DEPT KEEP OFF (*This Means You*). A Malayan girl in a once white coat was working at what was recognizably an averaging machine. He passed a young man asleep on what appeared to be a discarded massage table. Another washed off his pen in a drinking fountain, already streaked with sputum and dappled with gum. The scent of fresh Limburger from the nearby lockers mingled unsalubriously with engine oil.

By now the doctor had reached the outer portals of the sunken Sportspalast itself. There were only a handful more doors to unlock. A distant drumming came to his ears. A key of Lutheran proportions, stamped for some reason 39 SUPT B (Do Not Duplicate), let him in. Another gave access to a door marked WOMEN (*Keep Out*). Still scratched underneath, he observed, were the words, It Was Hal. This changing-room was used principally by the faculty but, since a notice to the effect would never have deterred a single Lincoln student, the sports staff had evolved this other Dadaist device for privacy. There was actually, Orrin Bunch believed, one month in summer when the room was indeed commandeered by a number of girl triple-gainer experts from the high schools, who duly hurled themselves like asterisks through the air for hours on end. But during term-time it was empty.

Dr. Bunch was already undoing the first buttons of his knife-edged suit as he entered this chamber, to find to his surprise three students there talking. Not good. Few found the haven this

early in the term. The doctor undressed fast, folding his clothes in a locker on which he snapped his special combination padlock.

"And for the first time, min', it's scientifically possible to imagine the idea of an eternal God. I mean, in the world of Calc, the past and future is eliminated by considering an infinitesimal interval during which all characteristics of any system remain constant, am I right, Artie?"

Clutching the palms of his feet, a youth responded laboriously, "Right."

"So there's your infinite deity. Hey, fellow, got the time?" he asked the neatly naked doctor padding by. The reply was a smiling head-shake although, under the shower, Dr. Bunch knew it was exactly nine thirty-six and that the temperature of the water would today be between 82 and 83. For a moment he permitted himself a humming sound, vigorously soaping his still firm body. During the past summer he had taken with him on the boat a clever novel, winner of the National Fiction Book Award, in which the author talked of "old suns growing cold." Why any village idiot at Lincoln, reflected the doctor as he paddled through the foot-bath, knew that suns grew hotter not colder with age, young suns belonged to spectral classes K and M and had temperatures rarely exceeding $10,000^{\circ}$ k, whereas old suns, on the fringes of galaxies, attained temperatures up to $54,000^{\circ}$.

Opening the final door with the key elasticked to his wrist, the professor might have stepped into another world. A scene of luxury Roman in its contrast with the grubby upper universe, it gave the impression of a set for some epic. Beyond the pillared curve directly before him—for the pool had been cut in the shape of a dollar sign and then tiled gold, the college color—the water rocked in flakelets of enticing light. Marble nearly hot massaged his feet. On a positively Pompeian portico-dais at one end two Boxer dogs looked up, their coats like shot silk. Beshorted in towelling, the sports instructor on duty reclined in his canvas chair, reading the previous evening's *Journal-American* and enjoying a sinusoidal cigar. Indeed, the flying European sociologist

would doubtless have put this scene down to some compulsive love of cleanliness, but the naked doctor was unbothered by considerations of that nature.

There were, he happily noted, few students about and, by the pool's inverted snobbery, the few present wore swimming shorts, designation of the team. (The skipper alone was conceded the glory of an old-fashioned, Coney Island full-piece.)

"Orrin Bunch, is it," came bellowing across the ripples. "Glad to see you back, doctor. You look in shape."

"I am, thanks, Professor Danzig," he called back with a wave as he approached the water. By now he knew these fellows, Danzig, Ryan, and the rest, extremely well. And he liked them. The calmest citizens on Lincoln's payroll, they had created their world within a world down here, complete with sleeping facilities, sitz baths and private cooking range. The doctor gave a sniff. Danzig had actually started life as an assistant chef at Nimb's in the Copenhagen Tivoli. It was good to come out from a stiff swim to the hint of *boeuf bourguignon* in the air, or that simmering *pot-au-feu* which might be kept going several days on end. Untroubled by the politics overhead, eating healthily and unhurriedly, half-naked all day long, they lay or lounged in these green glooms, sybarites of the city's depths. Dr. Bunch allowed himself the vanity of a stunning deadman dive.

Without opening his eyes Eddie Drosa rolled in bed and turned down his alarm-clock radio. Another of those ballads by The Caterwauls. Big Day. He knew those plates. Tossing back the covers he shivered, prone, for a second. Jesus, his first English class. Without getting out of bed he slammed the window and got his eyelids open.

Seasonable temperatures, uh, Mr. Weather Man?

Wrong as usual. Seasonable for January, this was September yet. In an abrupt motion that sent the blind spinning he sat suddenly straight.

"HEYMMA! Know what time it is?"

Answer came there none. He could hear his mother humming to herself over the eggs sizzling in the kitchen. Come to think of it she always seemed to be cooking. Either that or reading one of those old Russian novels of hers. The morning procession was in full swing and when his father, an accountant for a chain of discount stores, came clumping past from the bathroom, Eddie swung his legs out of bed and pushed at the sleep in his eyes.

Outside it was a cold day for fall, and the street had an ugliness about it that seemed peculiarly purposeful. A tritone Olds caught his eye. There was a Lincoln parking sticker on the windshield. A professor, maybe? Eddie shrugged. Nice bus, though. Bumper bulges big enough to. Jesus. A Honey to Handle. He stretched and yawned.

On his way to the bathroom he yelled through to his mother: "HEYMMA! I'm late."

"That's nice." The mater's invariable answer to anything he might say before eight A.M. and to the majority of remarks he made thereafter.

The last room Eddie passed along the passage was his sister's. The door was open.

"Hey, Illy."

The Music and Arts music-and-arts major was on her knees in her nightgown searching for something under the bed. She vouchsafed no answer either. What was the matter with the dump this morning? Everyone kicked off goopy or something.

That blonde hair tousled. Raaaather rumpy. No doubt but that once you'd disentangled the ponytail ribbons from the popsicles and peanut brittle Illona would be a fairly delectable specimen.

For the right guy, that was.

"If you're looking for the bed, it's on top of you." He went his way.

This morning he put on a suit. Gray with flecks of white. Pretty sharp, he thought, as he confronted his reflection in the mirror, the coat long over the stubby body, the pants keen. Only—he tugged at the mop of brownish hair—the same old face.

Humbly Eddie humped his shoulders and stumped through to the kitchen for breakfast.

Half a glass of juice (Oops! Sparkling Glass of Top-o'-the-Morning, Tangy, Vitamin-Packed Orange Juice). Piece of toast. Glass of milk. Half an apple pie.

“Wheee-wheee!” His sister swung through the door, whee-ing through her plum of pursed-up kissproof. “The organization man in the gray flannel suit hidden-persuading the lonely crowd, get that!”

He paid no heed. Music and Arts had been open two weeks already and Illona had none of the nervousness of those first days of classes he had. She brushed his shoulder.

“It bin snowing on you, or sumpin’?”

“Do yourself a favor, Illy, will you. Get lost while I have breakfast.”

But when he left the table a few minutes later she threw out casually, “You wanna help me with that math?”

He nodded absently. Back in his room one of Presley’s new laws of heredity was now playing. He didn’t switch it off when Illona came in with her exercise and texts. These he checked first. There’d been one occasion when he had sweated through a homework assignment for Illy only to find out later he’d done her boyfriend’s. She was frowning.

“I have a *very* low threshold on our Math teach.”

“Yeah?” Eddie glanced at his watch. Just time to crack the problem for her. Then, away. He showed her how to solve it—too easy really, Math had always been a breeze for him—but he could see she didn’t understand though she bobbed her ponytail like a flag. Her last term at high school, too. He shook his head with elder-brother gravity. She’d never learn.

Outside, in the street, the bleakness of the environment in which he had been brought up for the past eleven years of his life, ever since his Russian Mom and Italian Pop had decided to emigrate from Bologna, struck at him forcibly. Depressing wasn’t the word for it this morning, he thought, as he straddled his baby-

blue Lambretta TV-175 and gunned the motor, brick on utter brick, gray, gray, gray. The scooter was nicknamed Melody and pasted in front of his knees were two pinups, one of "Irish" McCalla and the other of Eve Meyer, both clipped from *Night and Day*, a monthly Eddie read daily. As he glanced now at those huge heroines, accidentally nudging one prodigious dug as he shoved from the curb, he remembered Jeany, the Wisconsin Soph he'd met that summer. She'd sworn to be in New York for Thanksgiving again, or Christmas at latest. He sighed. A lot of chance he had with her.

The outlines of Lincoln College, at which he arrived after some twenty minutes driving, struck him as accordingly imposing. He parked and was soon panting into one of the thronged corridors. If only he could make the grade in this English course, the rest'd be a cinch.

Mark, Irv Goldstein, and Jerry were in the mill around the elevators. To be frank, with his big pale face and wide, sculpted forehead Mark De Vayo (the good-looking no-good) looked today like a studied replica labeled "Neighborhood Hood."

"Here comes Eddie."

"A symphony in gray."

"Yeah. Whistler's brother yet."

"Who we got for English 1? You my section, Irv?"

Eddie spotted others he knew, Joel Kenigsberg (the college radio king), Phil Arkushan, Howie, dozens more. They were all chatting and laughing. Second day of classes, huh? It might all have been back at good old P. S. 168. The same hassle as they packed in the elevators. In the crush Eddie found himself wedged against the softish flanks of handsome Mark De Vayo, who had wedged himself carefully behind Susan Libermann, a very big girl. Pretty, too.

"If you knew Susie like I know Susie," Mark murmured to Eddie loud enough for the girl to hear, "you'd be disappointed."

"Yeah." She tried to turn away. "An' I'll never be lonely with anyone else but you, boyfriend."

The gates clashed wide. Mark remained in and the last Eddie heard as he stepped out was Sue crossly exclaiming, "All right, you can cut it out now, big boy, everyone's getting off."

"I want for to 'member you jus' as you are this term, Miss Libermann."

Jerry Blass, a huge slack-limbed weight-lifter who liked to say he was going to Lincoln simply because he was too lazy to forge himself a degree, swung into stride with Eddie.

"English 1?"

"Yeh."

"Abandon hope all ye who enter here."

They slouched into the already warm, grubby classroom, duplicate of dozens Eddie had seen since embarking on public education in the city. But as he sat down, real cool at the back beside Jerry, a flicker of fear tongued him like a lash. Would he make it here? All that composition crap. A guy never knew where he stood. But he *had* to make it here. There just wasn't any alternative. He gulped mildly. The rest of the guys around him looked bright. And, come right down to it, he was so goddam stupid, wasn't he? So his pop kept telling him, at any rate. He stole a glance at Jerry. It seemed to him that the national collegiate weight-lifting quarter finalist appeared a trifle paler in the face, also.

"Who we got?"

"Dunno."

"Guy called Bunch," said a lean, energetic-looking boy in front.

"Yeah, what sort of a name *is* that?" said Eddie in a disgruntled tone.

"They say he flunked precisely one third of English 1 last term."

Eddie gulped again, trying to look casual. "All this damn English and literature crap," he complained, "why can't they let a guy get on with the job."

"Useless knowledge," agreed Jerry Blass, "these crap courses are a waste of time."

"No wonder the Russians beat us into space." And Eddie added, "Wish I was on the moon right now."

Carol Lester scurried along the sidewalk to the bus stop, arms cradled under the bricks of several texts. Somebody must be making a fortune out of books like these, she thought, as she tried to hitch up both them and her Band-Aid-patched spectacles in the same motion. Yeah, someone. Not me.

This morning Carol had drawn her tough dark hair skull-tight to a bun. She'd be seeing *him*. She made herself half-laugh at the thought. Her skimpy body was principally encased in a sloppy blue sweater and worn black velveteen slacks that had long lost any shape whatever. The bus jolted off as soon as she got in, causing her to spill Weinberg and Shabat's *Society and Man* on the toe of a patron of the happy surface way who duly cursed her. The driver, looking more like Cardinal Spellman than was probable for even a New York City bus driver this morning, did not condescend to shift his eyes when she showed her pass. She sat down next a rude Negro lady in back.

No one was talking in the bus. She was glad. Bus conversations usually had a kind of manic repetition that reminded her of what she'd read so far of the new French school of fiction, that or the nuthouse. All on their way to work. A few eyes scanning ads so imbecilic as to attain, here and there, a genuine measure of genius. Eyes seeking where to look. And some, so early in this day, already shut in sleep. Carol chewed gum with her customary mastication of frenzied despair.

Old Linc! The Gothic towers strove up. Same as last term. Same as last week, when she'd come to register. Same as yesterday, same as. . . . Oh God, three more years to go yet. The second day of winter classes and here she was, wondering whether she could stay sane for another semester already.

Three more years of commuting to college, grabbing a hodge-podge of unrelated informational detail, scraping for a job each summer, three years of coffee and butts in Bickford's for kicks,

and an occasional night spent gratis on the subway on behalf of late copy for *The Eagle*. Which reminded her. Ivan the Ed had called. Special meeting. Big Deal. She'd see Tommy there.

Sweet rat, my hat! She gave herself a stiffish kick in the shins, mumbled an apology to the Negro lady, and scrambled off the bus outside the college gates. As she slipped in past the guards a memory of something silly she'd said to Tommy last term made her twist her face and wince. Glance at her schedule sheet. No, there was no out. English 1. Jackson 417. Oh Christ, no spark of life left anywhere at all.

Nervously chewing, nonchalantly shrugging, Carol Lester ferreted into Jackson, past the laughing frat boys, the blondes in loden coats, the brunettes in sad black sweaters (showing only *pain*), the glossy Dance Lounge Majors, and worried her way to the elevators, wondering who the professor would be. One of those walking deadbeats with a nothing face, no doubt. The English Department seemed full of them.

Four!

Smash, bang! All the little Westinghouse engineers making the lights go 1-2-3. Students with slide rules flapping at their hips stepped out, jostling and joking. She bit her lip as the elevator continued up. Give it a few more years and Linc students would be strutting the corridors decorated with A.C. generators and mass spectographs. Probably were already.

The God of the Photoelectric Cell. O Lord of Nuclear Force (Blessed Be His Name). Sandburg would write an *Ode to a Cyclotron*, the little "cat-feet" fellow, wasn't he?

How to break out of it all. To shatter, well, yes, *everything*, for Pete's sake. To destroy the nothingness so that something could grow, and live. "Then we'll see, huh," thought Carol, as she stepped out on the fourth floor, tipping back her glasses with that nervous gesture of hers she hated so.

Hastily she entered the classroom, head low, squeezing at her slacks. All term with these dumb crambos. Books slammed to the

floor about her. She placed conspicuously on her lap Feiffer's early *Sick Sick Sick*.

"Care for a smoke?" A lanky youth in NROTC drill stuck out a Camel from the next seat.

"Nope."

No life. Nothing. She didn't get on with Camel-smokers too well as a rule. That last dance Tommy had taken her to. Twist the conversation somehow (and God! sometimes it did look begging)—she suddenly wondered if she should communicate to this *kid* the fact that smoking wasn't allowed in classrooms anyway. It would have made her die with laughter to do so, as a matter of fact, and watch his solemn, so square face, really it would.

Now she pushed at her spectacles and dug into the composition handbook she'd bought in the college bookstore, that friendly emporium where "browsing" was supervised from overhead mirrors and every shopper, student or faculty, frisked expertly on exit. It wasn't any use. She'd never been any good. Face it. Right as a kid no one had ever wanted to cross at street corners, pop on the top of playground chutes, give ice-cream cornets to. Then, she'd always detested the kind of mushy food she'd been supposed to like as a kid. For years her father, an absent-minded steam fitter with a penchant for the *Hagiographa*, had forgotten her birthday while her mother had grown increasingly anxious about her plain daughter going off into corners to read *spooky* books. A teacher had early referred to her as "secretive and moody." All that sort of thing. Feet shifted. Seats pushed. More students came in. Oh well. At least she could always be friends with herself.

"Jess!" hissed Roy Talyacan at the back of the class. "Willya lamp that chicken, willya."

Jesse Paul rose slowly from the left ear on which he'd been reclining preparatory to the commencement of another crap course and stared.

"Y'mean that wharf rat with the wounded glasses, you off your nut, man?"

"Na. The one coming behin' her, y'dope."

Jesse stared again and frankly glugged.

Smilingly Fitzgerald (Fitz) Sullivan had sashayed into the crowded English 1 classroom a few calculated paces behind Carol, all pearls and cashmere sweater and tight tweed skirt. To be honest, almost anything Fitz put on tended to look tight-fitting. Today she was a member of the young Connecticut set, soft hair with golden glints, soft socks, gentle gestures—only the act was spiked with about ten times as much sex as ever showed up at all the PTA meetings in Darien and Rowayton put together.

"They're real," muttered Roy.

"The poils?"

"Na." Roy turned and contemplated his pal with pity. "Sometimes you so goddam stupid, Jess, y'know it."

Fitz had settled herself in a seat and conversation round her lapsed. Nature had endowed this second-generation colleen with a chest the mammoplasticians might have described as "over-large for comfort." For the comfort of any Lincoln student within yards of her, at any rate.

Eddie Drosa turned to Jerry Blass. "Our vines have tender grapes."

"The kine of Bashan, old boy."

At that moment a broad-nosed, dough-faced dwarf with tufts of woolly hair strewn about his pate padded softly in and plunked a satchel on the teacher's table. The class caught its breath.

"Diss beink Joiman Tu?"

Nobody said anything. Roy Talyacan murmured, "Afghanistan Nationalism: History 99."

A girl in the front row said, "This is English 1."

"Advanced Plagiarism," added Jesse Paul under his breath.

"Yeah. Mainly, When to Lift."

"Denn dis is *not* Joiman Tu." The professor consulted his schedule card and with an apologetic smile poddled out. The

class heaved a sigh of relief. Fitzgeraldine Sullivan changed her seat. A fat, owl-faced and prematurely balding student in the row behind her now slipped back a note to Jesse Paul—"This is the most 'voluptuous piece of feminine gender' I seen on campus yet."

Jesse wrote beneath it: "Dear Egg. Agree. At times like these I would like to been reincarnated as a classroom chair."

When he had sent it back through the mainly silent class Roy asked behind his hand, "Whass eatin' Rich?"

"Wansa meet the White Rock girl."

It was close on ten. Most of the students had by this time closed their science texts and were awaiting the arrival of the instructor. There was a rumor his name was Bunch and a few feeble jokes began to circulate. The owl-faced student raised two poached eyes to the sweating ceiling, thought a minute, then passed back a second note: "How do I introduce myself to 'her'?"

Jesse Paul looked at this a long time. Then he giggled and in a hoarse breath directed at nobody in particular got out, "She on'y four feet away from you, ya'ox." Under the message he added, "Ask her to a dance, BUM."

The boy in front read it, shook his head, turned and in a loud tone said, "Too much greenbacks. I'm financially 'out of the picture' this term, Jess."

"Preliminary Bankruptcy," yawned Roy Talyacan. "Biz Ad 47. To Fold or Not to Fold. What say we hit the frat house for a few hands after, Jess?"

Jesse slumped his narrow shoulders in a gesture of mingled agreement and contempt and reclined on his ear again. Carol Lester scratched the knuckle of one fist until droplets of red blood appeared. Fitzgeraldine Sullivan crossed her legs with a rustle and lit a gold-tipped cigarette. Eddie Drosa shucked his jacket and loosened the knot of his tie. The Bell Tower began to chime the hour.

Dr. Orrin Bunch had had his swim and with the first mellifluous notes floating from the Tudor masonry above was mak-

ing his way down the emptying hallway of Jackson, under the motto *LUX ET VERITAS*. As he had anticipated, he turned the corner during the second carillon, probably around three seconds of ten. On the way he passed a disheveled, even food-stained member of the German Department evidently searching for his classroom. He was vaguely aware, through open doors, of laboratory sessions afoot, rows of students performing tests, and unpleasant dissections no doubt, while a shirt-sleeved teacher read his paper in front.

Various busts and glass cases of scientific exhibits lined this corridor, beneath a frieze *HOMER THUCYDIDES LUCRETIUS*. . . . Dr. Bunch observed that some of the heads had already been defaced by monocles, mustaches, clock signs, the like. He went by a door guarded by two colossal American flags. Glancing through to the inner room he caught sight of the wizened countenance, duplike across any Yorkville delicatessen counter, of the aged college President. He walked on. His own classroom door lay next a bust of Montaigne whose eyes had been penciled in, causing the French thinker to glance sharply left at Hume, who had been made to glance equally sharply back. For the professor liked to enter *on time* and it was not until the first note of the very hour struck from above that he strode in, closed the door crisply behind him, and went to the table in front of the class.

Burpee, Jonas: he read from the top of his stack.

“Mr. Burstein?”

“Here.”

“Mr. Drosa?”

“Here.”

“D as in Dick, right?”

“Right. Sir.”

Dr. Bunch swiftly marked the card. For a second his eyes met those of the individual who had answered. They seemed to be pleading to him, D as in D plus, that's all I'm asking for, Professor Orrin Bunch continued his roll.

At this point in the proceedings, however, a beardy student,

humming to himself, blundered in with a paper bag, clearly searching for somewhere to snatch a late breakfast or early lunch. He gaped at the gathering and the doctor made a gesture indicative of the other's removing himself utterly. The student complied, showering a chopped liver sandwich behind him as he went.

Richard Esses, Ceporah Fink, Vernett Kungro. Sex, sex?
"Miss Kungro?" he tried.

"Present." An ex-Estonian pencil stabbed the air. Dr. Bunch felt pleased. He did not like to make mistakes, least of all in public. One name caused him to pause. Ng. He spelt it out. An Oriental student put up his hand, uttering one tender archetypal syllable.

"Thank you," said Dr. Bunch. A few years back there had been an Arab immigrant who had caused consternation in every Lincoln roll book, not to mention the office of the Registrar, since his name, Englished, was a comma.

By now the tolerant doctor had read most of the cards out successfully and his active mind had already committed many faces to his memory alongside their respective names. He had noticed, however, two somewhat older individuals, both short, stocky men in middle age, as a matter of fact, sitting together at the back of the class. An overflow from Adult Education? Quite a few senior citizens of this sort did enroll at Lincoln and he gave the matter little thought. He merely registered the fact that so far he had not called their names. Things would straighten themselves out the next period or so.

"Mr. Schochet?"

"Not absent."

The doctor noted the pimply youth concerned, but gave no reaction. The last IBM card read Vkzpcjy, Igrana. Come, come, these class rolls were becoming more and more like optometrists' charts every year. Was the best thing to do to sneeze?

"I shall need help with this one," he said gaily. And after the student, a young lady with platinum hairdo, Fu Manchu finger-

nails and what appeared to be tight pyjamas on her lower half, had helped him out, he snapped a band round the cards and tucked them in his pocket. "Now then, if any of you do not have cards for this course in your possession, I must ask you to leave the room. Only those with clearly stamped registration cards can be permitted to attend."

In an amicable yet firm manner he glanced at the two adults in rear. To his satisfaction these dull twins arose and approached his table. When they were standing in front of it, the smaller of the two, wearing spectacles and carrying a sheaf of papers, asked curtly, "You Mr. Bunch?"

"Dr. Bunch." The correction was a mild one, albeit stiffened by nine years on the graduate treadmill.

"Orrin Bunch?" It was uttered as though attempting a weird foreign tongue.

"That is correct. If you do not have a class card, I must ask you to leave this room."

"You're suspended."

The doctor shot the man a smile. Practical jokes *this* early in the term? He rocked across the table slightly, his hands gripping the composition text.

"What did you say? I didn't quite catch . . ."

"Action of the City Council. You're suspended."

In the frozen air the flat, almost bored voice gripped the attention of the class as no instructor would ever grip it again. Dr. Bunch stood easily, still slightly smiling, gazing benevolently down at the man with the sheaf of official papers.

"Would you identify yourself, do you think?"

He cleared his throat and seemed about to speak when the two exchanged glances and moved rapidly round the table. Before the agog class knew what was happening there was a brief scuffle and their protesting professor was pushed physically out of the room and into the passage. The door slammed. Only the blackboard, from which an assignment in Milton's *Areopagitica* had been semierased, fronted now their astonished gaze.

Two

Alpha Pi Upsilon's frathouse consisted of the main portion of one of the several "substandard dwellings" fringing the Lincoln campus to the west. For the past two years its basement had been put to work by the indigent brothers as a Used Book Exchange. One of the bedrooms in back had been known to house the highly temporary quarters of an individual called Spider Prowse, who made brief but not unprofitable book on the premises.

Two days after their English 1 fiasco Jesse Paul and Roy Talyacan strolled in with some sandwiches, a bottle of liquor, and a deck of cards. It was rarely a frat man was seen at Lincoln without his cards. Day in, day out, at the cafeteria tables, after parties, on outings, dates, just anywhere, the well-thumbed deck was a badge of office of one of the few socially pretentious activities at the college.

The two men, who were the best of friends despite their relationship of insult, ruder retort, tough wisecrack and convulsions of merriment, found the place empty. These classmates and close neighbors had such a genuine understanding they liked to call themselves The Alliance. Only last term, when Jesse had had to work evenings in a Village bar, Roy had taken Jess's girl to the Summer Bawl held at the New Yorker Hotel and got her plastered on his friend's cash. Roy and the chick had put back a couple of bottles between them. Turning somewhat ill, this fresh

dream of neighborhood girlhood had soon got over it, however, and Roy hadn't lost an inch of his decorum, waiting for her with a Dutchie between his teeth while she vomited her heart out in the powder room.

In short, Roy Talyacan prided himself on his "stability," his "aplomb" as he also liked to term it. He had cultivated a "sincere" smile and often showed up, as now, in a white shirt, tie, English tweed jacket with nail-narrow lapels and gray flannels, a fairly exotic dress by average Lincoln standards. Whatever they were.

Jesse Paul also bought his clothes at Lord Fanshawe Inc., a small off-campus store that specialized in such sedulously British styles that one Lincoln freshman at least had been known to emerge, newly clad, muttering to himself, "*We should never have got out of India.*" Today Jess sported cord slacks under the customary three-quarter Bronx coat. His chief sign of sartorial distinction was a hectically tooled pair of shoes with two-inch ripple soles.

On the other hand, Jesse, it should be added, was still able to blush. He it was who had been far more affected by the strange scene in Jackson 417. And though he admired his buddy's insouciance, in effect he frequently outdistanced him. He was tall and extremely thin, with the appearance of an overgrown boy, unlike Roy who, if younger, looked his years. Too, Jess had done his military service before enrolling at the college.

"Man at work, man at work," he said quietly, pausing on the broken stoop. Roy followed his comrade's eyes. These were fixed to the back of a pair of bullfighter pants of show-stopping scarlet, femininely filled. "Yay, yay, man at work," cooed Jesse with a grin, and pressing his fists before his chest he crackled his knuckles like castanets.

"Peelin'?" Roy looked coolly at the scampering chick. "Fitz Sullivan, ain' it? Swaying for Jackson, no doubt. That crap class was today, huh?"

Jesse shrugged. Both knew they could safely cut English 1 this

morning, since no instructions concerning another professor had yet gone out, or, rather, come their way. "Cheez, I'd've aced that course, I'm telling ya. I swear I was an A student till that kid decided to enter the classroom."

"Roll you?" Roy led the way into the frat house, feigning the indifference of a Cathar. Despite the tug of lines growing round his chin, he had a cherubic face with soft, defenseless planes. "Question is, Does she or doesn't she?"

"Ach, she'd pig to her poppa before she wet her pants yet."

"Aw, go fall inna hole, willya. For me."

They went in giggling pointlessly and bumping into each other, to sit down to their sandwiches and Scotch in a front room, lavishly bedecked with pinups of the housemother, Jayne Mansfield. A mother, needless to say, with sufficient pectoral embonpoint to please a child of any age.

"Who you get for Geology, Jess?"

"Guy called Igneous or Sentimentary or sumpin'." Jesse was actually loath to have to confess he'd so much as bothered to attend a class that morning. He had chosen to sit in a big barber chair in front of the window.

"Whatta waste of time. Rustle some music, man."

Roy flopped to the radio and turned it loud. For a while they listened to a new recording from The Teardrops.

"Climbin' on the new survey."

"Where's Spider, anyone know?"

"Dying in the stretch somewhere, I guess."

"Holy God, he's gotta show up this term. Shilla prefers me solvent."

"Sure."

Between mouthfuls they chatted, but after a while the commercials' yakkity became too much even for their inattentive ears. "Hell!" Roy kicked off the pap. "Shoot me the day when they peddle a hand cream that's not only made for film stars, it's made out of 'em."

"There's a new deodorant. You put it on, see, and within thirty

seconds you become invisible. No one knows *where the stink is coming from yet!*"

With the Scotch the conversation took its usual turn. They discussed Roy's current chick, a Hunter senior called Shilla with hair like Persian lamb's fur and pear-shaped octaves—"It's what's up front that counts," as Roy was fond of pointing out. He had no idea what a dance he was being led by his Hunter Helen. The two grew giggly again.

"Cheez! The las' hop I seen Shilla her cleavage was so low I watched to see should she trip on her brooch maybe."

Gravely Roy nodded at the compliment. Second to praise for the "projectile-shaped bumpers" of his Buick, he could hear no sweeter. He preferred his girls to be appreciated. They turned to others. Jesse was presently dating a Macy's divorcee who looked like a hangover from the Sennet era but who provided him with that relaxation dear to all rye-blooded frat fellows. Both men now briefly discussed a docile brunette who had turned intellectual and joined things like the Lincoln Drama and Literary societies and even now, it was rumored, the very end of the road, the student newspaper itself. Since both repeatedly referred to her as a "slut" it was fair to conclude she was technically virgin and had successfully repudiated the advances of both. The Alliance ran over other local prospects, ending with a final dissection of another date Roy had failed to make and who had now married a house brother.

"God, but she was a slut."

"Can you imagine that bomb married to that fat Milton?"

"Their marital bed must be sagging so, they probably sleep on top of each other, y'know it."

"I'd like to be there to take pictures. Just once."

"Yay. Speaking of porny films, weren't those we saw at the smoker last term the worst?"

"Ach. I was out wit' the real thing," said Roy. "Y'member?" The perpetual, semihysterical smile on Jesse's face widened trembly.

"How 'bout a few hands of hearts, Royo?"

"Orright, two winners."

Roy dealt while Jesse leaned way back in the barber chair and started to throw his bite-size Cheez-Bits at the ceiling, trying to lodge them on the glass plate hung beneath the bulbs. Outside, students could be seen changing classes, hurrying in laughing groups, to and fro. Having dealt, Roy asked for a handful of the dampish Cheez-Bits and joined in the sport. Jesse's body now quivered like a jellyfish.

"Betya I get more inna you. After all, I used to play pro basketball. Well, semipro. 'Member?"

Wildly Jesse crumpled the wax-paper wrapping of his semi-masticated sandwich and hurled it, squealing, at the ceiling. Roy bent and picked up the now empty bottle and banged it down the room. It shattered. Both gaped, then gurgled in agreement.

Roy said: "Hey, help me put all the busted glass like here on the couch. Like this. Pointed end up, see."

Jesse lurched out the barber chair while Roy walked around the room with two paper bags picking up the pieces. Jesse was contemplating a wall from which stood out a buffalo head. This head had been stolen from Luchow's during an induction dinner and several of the older brothers still talked about their skill in smuggling it out of the place. After they had unscrewed it, they'd covered it with an overcoat and pretended it was a drunken friend. Jesse now climbed on a chair, turned his back to the wall, and spreading his arms along the horns assumed a posture of lonely crucifixion.

"Guess who?"

Roy shrieked at that. He turned into such a weeping jelly of uncontrollable mirth, in fact, that Jesse kicked away the chair and began swinging on the horns, imitating a monkey and making jungle whoops. With a crack the head fell off the wall, splitting on the floor.

"Holy Chee!"

After a momentary lull Jesse picked himself up and started giggling again. Roy joined in. He started singing something like "Poor Moose Is Done" to the tune of "Poor Judd Is Daid," and Jesse said snappily, "Well, pity."

"Holy shit!" cried Roy. They howled some more. "Orright, let's play out the hand, what say?"

They walked back to the table.

"Anybody know that old stunt wit' the water bottles?"

Roy shrugged. Laughter had sobered him slightly, though not much.

"Wait, I'll show you. An ole Army trick."

Jesse dashed out the room, down the corridor and into the kitchen in back. Roy took the barber chair and went on tossing Cheez-Bits at the light fixtures. Jesse came back with two old soda bottles filled with water. Keeping his thumb over their openings, he placed both bottles on the floor by the entrance, so that it would now be virtually impossible to remove them without getting water all over the place.

Not to be outdone, Roy had another stunt up his sleeve. He instructed Jesse in the setting up of a booby trap—"Also Army-style, y'know"—for he envied Jess his service. They got a broom from a back closet and stretched it across the rungs of two chairs which they placed on either side of the entrance to the room. Jesse began spreading garbage over the passageway, his shoulders hunching and dropping in a naïve way. Then they resumed their tossing of the Cheez-Bits.

Someone could be heard entering the house, whistling.

"Hey." Roy gripped his twitching comrade. They heard steps up the front stair. Then—"What's the hell's all this?" Then—a crack, a yell. The house manager, a chess expert, was writhing on the floor, gripping his knees. The broom lay broken beside him. Jesse fairly howled.

"Judas Priest." The manager was inspecting a cut on his elbow. Then his eyes went to the split moose head lying in the water.

"I thought you guys were supposed to be in English 1. What the hell you been playing at here?"

Jesse was still doubled with laughter but Roy stood in strange silence, his fresh-colored face suddenly somber. "We bin having fun," he said in a surly tone.

"Yay, yay," agreed Jesse. "Having a time."

"Well, that's a fine way to start the term, for Chris' sake. Some guy's gonna have to clear up this goddam mess."

"Let's go, Jess." Roy was making for the door.

"Yay, yay." Snapping his finger joints his friend followed. "We jus' bin having fun. Get yourself some of that Scotch. The Alliance wuz here."

The couple made for Roy's car, parked outside. Roy drove off in a couple of swift swings from the curb, hitting the gas. He was a man.

Stanley Schochet knew they were laughing at him as he unlocked his Rambler, tossed in his texts, relocked, and walked back through the gates over the drawbridge that noon. He was as sure they were as he had been when that phony professor they'd fired had called his name out in English 1 and he'd seen the guy blanch at his answer.

They'd laughed at him all his first year at Lincoln, at his spotty skin, his cowlick hair, his slobby slacks, his scrofulous footwear. Only, one thing. They never had the nerve to do it *to his face*. It was always behind his back. The trouble was Stanley had never really wanted to study in a school of technology in the first place; so far as any formed desire had begun in his head, he'd have preferred a vaguely liberal arts program. By this time, however, at least a dozen deans had made so many math and science courses required "in the interests of keeping up with the rapid technological advances of our world," a Lincoln Bachelor of Arts was a hydrolic wiz. Or something. So Stanley had found himself doing the usual rote of courses on wiring extensions, and

rocket fuels, and kinetic thermodynamics and thermetic kinedynamics and all that jazz. He was flaked out already and what was worse, the job he took on the side—in a messenger service—had today left his fingers stinking of perfume. A bottle must have broken in that last container he'd delivered.

Scowling at his small and ill-shod feet, Stanley made for Weintroub Student Center, known locally as Winey or, more facetiously at times, as Wino. Just time to grab a bite to eat before his second Chem class. He swerved for the cafeteria.

The Subway School, ha. This dump was jammed tighter than Grand Central at rush hour yet. For Lincoln, at least, it *was* rush hour, that hectic hiatus of forty minutes or so in what for most students was a rote of classes from eight to six. All the same, Stanley had to confess as he selected a watery, disgruntled frank set skittishly inside a slit Coney bun, Winey with its pleasant modern furnishings, and Impressionist reproductions, was in better taste than most students' homes. The line moved laboriously forward.

“Baygin egg?”

“Na. Toon sannish.”

“Whytoes?”

Stanley plucked a deep-deep double-scoop of pineapple ice-cream.

“Sumna drink?”

“Chawklamlk. Hommush?”

“One senny.”

“One *senny!*”

There was one thing about Stanley's tastes. He was addicted to ketchup, and always had been. So on his way to find a table he bashed at the communal bottle till a gout spurted suddenly, smothering his frank. Then he lathered his ice cream with it, too. Beethoven's Ninth was being piped into the eating place. Finally, he located a table with only two students: Ira, a gentle, quasi-somnambulist creature with strong black hair growing off a perpetually corrugated forehead and, below that, a pair of

thick-lensed bifocals; George, a smiley lower junior with over-long arms.

"Hi, Stan."

"Hi."

"Jesus, you smell like a woman."

"Prattically any chemical change can take place in Lincoln, didn'ja know?"

Stan sat down and they chatted over their repast. There was one thing about choosing a table with Ira—there wouldn't be any female company around. In this day of the sidewalk Lothario there were those, even at this so-called streetcar school, who were scared stiff of the weaker sex. Ira was one of them. In a desultory, scornful manner the three discussed teachers, courses, summer jobs. Ira, it transpired, had been a bus boy in a Vermont resort, a sweatshop assignment.

"Any more of your English profs fired this morning, Stan?" he asked. "Y'know, I passed that guy on my way to school the day they kicked him out. I had that kook las' term."

"Replacement. Guy called Fleisch."

"What was he like?"

"Stoopid."

"Cheez, the assignments I picked up today could keep a guy busy till Easter yet."

"You complaining? I got a job besides."

"Y'know one thing, ol' man," said George with an exaggerated apostrophe of his arms, "I find English far tougher than Math."

"It's mostly the fault of the professors."

"I guess you have to expect that with a city college."

"Wadja get in 51?"

"Fifty-one."

So it went, George persisting in capping nearly everything they said with his attempt at a wisecrack. Oh, the same pathetic round of phony clichés, thought Stanley, burying his face in his frank and wiping the ketchup off his pimples with a paper napkin.

Ira on the whole said little. A fairly saintly bird. Maybe dug Zen. George had now finished his meal and he proceeded to pull out his pockets one by one, a Lincoln cafeteria trick. Out of only one did anything fall, a damp and grayish tissue.

It was all exactly the same. How Stanley hated George—his wisecracks, his brashness, his bad breath. In a minute George, with that forced, phony Lincoln humor of his, would tell him not to blow a gasket. Why the hell he had to keep on, year after year, with his corny sayings and self-conscious attempts to be funny. . . .

“Who you have for Psych this half?”

That makes the fifth time he’s asked me that same stupid question already, Stanley thought.

“That makes the fifth time you’ve asked me that same stupid question already, George.”

“Now, now, Stan, don’t blow a . . .”

“How about a gut, George? I’m all out of gaskets. And if you think I’m going to pay for your lunch.”

“Now, Stan, jus’ take is easy.”

While George jabbered idiotically away—“Don’t *misunderstand* me, Stan, let’s be friends this half” (Where’d he get that half jazz?)—Stanley stared around the room. Students lounged on the Eames and Wegner copies. What a rat race. All laughing at him, all showing their yellow teeth.

And his job. During summer he’d worked for the messenger service, everything from high-carat diamonds to samples of old ladies’ urine, and the job had simply corroborated his deepest beliefs.

All he’d been able to see in the middle of Manhattan, in the hub of the world’s greatest metropolis, had been a lot of bastards all hurrying uptown or all hurrying downtown or all hurrying crosstown. Anyway, all hurrying. And definitely all bastards.

It was not that Stanley was a routine rebel. He had no smallest

desire, and certainly not the energy, to sow chaos in anyone's institutions. He just looked at twentieth-century urban existence and *saw nothing*. In other words he said No. It stank. To high heaven it stank yet. Stanley simply refused to accept the assumptions by means of which this madness calling itself reality held together. If it held together.

"Utterly senseless," he said suddenly aloud, thinking: America the Beautiful, a lot of goopniks fleeling for their lives pitch here because they can't get no further.

"What's that, Stan, old man?"

And George—George was the leader of the sneerers. George represented everything that Lincoln stood for: the corn, the competition, the noise, the yellow teeth. *And* the too long arms.

"I don't know that I can take much more of this." Stanley gestured grandiloquently. George and Ira nodded knowingly over their milk.

"Yeh," George came back promptly. "I'm thinking of dropping Intro to Lit 2 myself. Those crap courses are a waste of a man's time, y'know it."

"I don't mean that, I don't mean the pace, it's not that." Stanley corrected him with near-tearful weariness. "I gotta *light* program this term, I tell you."

"Then what's buggin' you, old man?"

"Ah, all this." He gestured again. "I dunno. It makes no sense to me."

"How you mean, fer chrissake?"

Stanley shrugged. "Has no connection with human society."

During the silence George drummed with his fingers on the laminated tabletop, glancing from side to side.

"Well, what're you going to *do* about it?" Ira mildly inquired.

Stanley shrugged again. He already felt like weeping. George had started humming now, his arms spidering either side of him. No, he had no answer to that one, why should he have? As his

mother had repeatedly put it, he was fed up, he'd get over it. Fed up, get over it. Gettoverit, feddup. But when George smiled, "Trouble, trouble, trouble, sport," and patted Stanley comfortingly, then the critic in revolt all but gagged. He dug fiercely into his incarnadine ice cream.

"Boy, you sure go for ketchup," Ira said softly, gazing down through the short-range half of his glasses.

Abruptly Stanley got up and went to fill a paper cup from a fountain at the side. It was a new installation and he couldn't see how to work it. He gave the top lever a wild stab, stamped on what might have been a release pedal, finally gave up. If only he had that control he knew at pool. How he could wock the balls into their sockets! His spirit of resentment was such that he actually felt himself, if not approving, at least sympathizing with the mechanical failure, or refusal. Good, good.

"Hmnhl!" he snorted, bending over the basin to see if he'd missed anything. A jet of water gushed joyously into his right eye. The God of the Photoelectric Cell had released the traditional image of life. So blessed, he returned to the table.

The Eagle met in Weintroub 309, this a bare place furnished with a few collapsing tables and chairs. The most conspicuous item at the moment was a set of atom-raid instructions so semantically involved as to reach surrealism—at best nonsense, at worst sedition—under which some weary copy editor had written AND DIE LIKE RATS IN WINO.

The editor of the undergrad daily, Ivan Vogel, was an upper-classman with lean, intelligent good looks and the wiry physique of a well-trained J. Robert Oppenheimer. He munched a hero sandwich riding his chair back to front. The rest of the staff—male now but for one—sat around, smoking or eating.

"So. Whatta we do?" A stocky youth in castoff Korean denims thrust forward his face, picking at his septum.

"'Bout what, Lewy?"

“This Bunch.”

“Which? The Subway Bunch?”

There was a sigh. They knew. The girl leaned forward, languidly following her Parliament's snake of smoke: “I called up his home again a couple of times this morning.”

“I was going to ask you about that, Syl.”

“No dice. Either out, or not answering.”

“This is fantastic,” said the editor in the silence. “Nothing like this has happened in city education since the Russell fiasco. It's disgusting.” He resumed his efficient eating.

“When you say Russell, Iv, do you mean Rosalind or Bertrand?”

There was a groan. “Give me Manny Kant.”

Just then the door opened and Carol Lester slid breathfully in, under her crate of texts. Frowning furiously, she subsided into a seat beside a student whose sharp face was hidden behind huge horn-rims. She pushed at her own.

“How's my Carol?”

“How's my Tommy?” she countered quickly, brightly. And her books cascaded like shuffleboard chucks.

“Hi, Cay-rol! What's the story on *yeuu*?”

“Carol, I think you've by now met everyone here except Sylvia,” Ivan was saying through his sandwich, as he lifted his ass polite inches off his seat. “Syl, this is Carol. Carol, Syl.”

“The Brigitte Bardot of the BMT,” Lewy Jantaneo muttered to the sports editor, a colored boy with an aspiring Castro beard, while Carol nervously retreated behind the small talk of the introduction. Her neighbor, Tommy Dehl, was bowed collecting her tomes.

“What about Bunch?”

“What about the humor page?”

“Need we have one?”

A boy said, “If it's funny it's been told before and if it hasn't been told before, it's too clean.”

"And if it's sexy enough to interest an engineering frosh who still has time to masturbate," completed another male voice from a corner, "why, then we'll all get kicked out of school."

There came a pause.

"I know one about a cardinal," came in Lewy Jantaneo.

"Religious cracks are out. Remember Queens."

"But this one," Lewy staunchly objected, "is about a *bird*."

"I'm telling ya, man. We're not interested in his private life neither."

"Oh you schnuks." Lewy shook his head in rank despair. "You living jerks. It was a good one. A beaut."

"Never mind," Sylvia consoled from behind her baleful haze, "the Chinese probably thought of it first."

"They thought of everything first."

"Maybe they thought first."

"What say we run a fixture of Pitz? I mean, a picture of Fitz." The new speaker corrected himself, shaking his head in the laughter that succeeded his *lapsus linguae*.

"What, again?"

"Oh who needs fins?" broke in Sylvia's brisk voice. "Who needs size forty bosoms? Who needs what they're not getting around here anyhow? Let's come to the point, we haven't all that time. This is a clear case of infringement of academic liberty. It's straight intellectual epigonism."

"Uh?" The sports editor's brow crinkled.

"Yeh, spare us the Hebrew, Syl."

Lew Jantaneo was shaking his mop. "This is an angel. Fitz Sullivan is strictly an angel."

"Yeah. Don't be such a schnorah, Syl, that kid's a talented girdle. All she needs to be really Alfa-Romeo is an rpm counter in rear."

"Hell, let's start a correspondence column 'bout whether lemonade is kosher, why don' we. My rabbi . . ."

Coldly Ivan Vogel licked each of his slender fingers and called the meeting to order.

"Sit's this," he said. "Orrin Bunch of the English Department was suspended by CCMCE for 'conduct unbecoming.'"

"What's CCMCE?" asked Carol timidly, giving her bandaged glasses another hitch.

"City Council for Municipal College Education."

"Oh." After a moment she added, "I see."

"They don't have to do any more explaining," Vogel added. "I checked Regents Rules and the pertinent State Ed Laws. They can fire you for 'conduct unbecoming' and never say a word. I don' know, somehow this thing fails to go down my gullet."

"Look, Iv, why should we stick our neck out for the faculty? They've got the Civil Liberties boys if they want 'em, ain't they?"

The boy in the corner scratched his nylon shirt. "That bad cat gave me a D in 3."

"Framed you, huh."

"He rung my chimes in that final. The bastard."

"Anti-Semitic."

"Sure."

"Lew's a stringer for the *Trib* and down there they're saying maybe CCMCE know something on Bunch. Something serious behind this, I mean."

"Mainly a nasty smell." Ivan Vogel hunched his bony shoulders impatiently into the discussion. "Oh sure. Who knows? I've checked personally with the Chairman of the Department, however, and Katzy claims they're all as much in the dark about it as we are. Dammit, the guy ought to be told. He deserves to know."

"Maybe Katzy knows. Maybe what he was giving you, Iv, was so much no-comment treacle."

"I don't think so," said Carol Lester in a little burst. "I know a girl who works part time in the library and the talk there is that Professor Katzman saw the President personally over this."

"And the library know everything," smiled Tommy Dehl.

Carol screwed her feet in knots.

"Anyway, like Sylvia said, Bunch isn't talking and his lawyer's

not talking. Since his appeal isn't due to come up for hearing by CCMCE till well into the new year, that leaves his friends on the faculty. And so far as I can find out, the guy didn't have any friends on the faculty."

"Not too many in the student body neither," said Lewy Jantaneo firmly.

"Oh, you slay me," said Carol suddenly.

Vogel said, "Apart from the fact that he gave out motley grades, the man seems to have been all right. What was his specialty, anyone know?"

"Influence of the rainbow on Julius Caesar maybe."

"The tadpole in Malayan literature."

"This is serious," snapped Sylvia Hantmann. She was a good-looking enough soph, as it happened, a brownette with rather overpowering glasses but fine, flowing hair and the fleshy figure of many Lincoln co-eds. Yet her energetic manner seemed like some crisp correction to the curves beneath the Ohrbach jumper.

"Yes, personally I think it's very horrible," agreed Carol Lester in her thin high tone.

"So do I." All looked at the editor. The maturity of this quiet senior who had just returned from a scholarship year in Israel commanded authority among them. Even before he had left for the Middle East, in fact, Vogel had been one of those modestly astonishing Lincoln students, accomplishing in his "spare" time about five times as much paperwork as most Madison Avenue executives reckoned to get through in a year—President of Hillel, Editor of *The Eagle*, Student Council Representative, Vice-President of his class, member of Tau Delta Phi, American Society of Mechanical Engineers, so forth. He spoke impressively, without scorn. "Personally I have a strong hunch the thing's political. Very marshy, you might say. The pattern is familiar. You dig up something in the guy's past and go cheer before the city fathers for having caught another Communist."

For a second there was silence. Painfully, sleepily, Tommy

Dehl, whose hair was the color of his forehead, said, "You know, Iv, we're buying trouble if we stick our noses into this."

"McCarthy," exclaimed Sylvia Hantmann.

"McCarthy, McFarthy. I tell ya, most of the students never even heard of the guy. Jesus, most of us were 'bout six years old when that character was in operation."

"Yeah," agreed Lewy gloomingly. "Try getting CCMCE to talk. Try knocking our heads against a wall."

"Against Wall Street yet."

"Right," cut in Ivan Vogel decisively. "And that's how it's going round the country. The conservative renaissance, my God. It makes me puke. I tell you when I came back and saw all those button-down collars and white scuff shoes and gung-ho faces, I thanked God for Lincoln. Hell, it's one of the few places left where the frosh don't come in making like bank clerks."

"Nuttin' to lose, I guess."

"So that may be the reason. Anyway, if a place like this goes apathetic, I'll turn in my dog tags. Bunch seems to have been a right guy. Jesus Christ, surely someone ought to protest when an associate professor with twenty-seven years of service behind him gets the bum's rush from his classroom with no explanation whatsoever."

"Yeah, someone, Iv. Not us."

"You all feel like that?" No one spoke. He grinned. "I'm not trying to schmeikle you into this, mind. I'm fully aware it may mean suspension if one of the Deans gets his eye on *The Eagle* and . . ."

"Can read," suggested Lewy tartly.

"Dean Who?" asked Carol absently. Since no one was looking she was trying to blow smoke rings.

"Hell, the Deans here outnumber the students yet."

"We'll take a vote on this," Vogel resumed, "but I'm for starting a running story on Bunch and seeing what student reaction builds up."

"Mebbe nil."

"And that's the point, Wayne," he replied urgently to the colored boy. "This is not good." He waited a moment, his tawny eyes flickering over Sylvia Hantmann's sympathetic flesh. "That's my suggestion. From what Lew says the thing's dead already so far as the national or even city press is concerned. We'll keep it alive. What do you say?"

There was barely a pause. Sylvia put up her hand emphatically first and then Carol Lester darted hers into the air. Brushing his beard, the sports editor followed suit and when Vogel next looked up there was unanimity. He barely smiled.

"I suggested this get-together because in a couple hours time the English Department are meeting for the first time this term. And rumors have it they mean business. There's bound to be action on the Bunch affair. One of us ought to find out what we can from them afterwards."

"One of the girls," said Lewy. "I want for to graduate, Iv."

The editor nodded.

"I'll go." Carol Lester urged forward.

"Well, thanks, Carol. The trouble is . . . I was thinking." His eyes moved again to Sylvia Hantmann's legs which, as she skewed sideways on the broken chair, seemed to go on and on forever. "To tell you the truth, this is obviously a top action meeting they're having over there and, well, Syl here's really had the kind of experience we want for the cover. It's a tricky assignment, really."

"Sorry," Carol softly hissed, smiling with especially transparent sarcasm as she retreated, avoiding Tommy Dehl's eyes. "Surely."

"You free this P.M., Syl?"

"Natch." Sylvia Hantmann hoisted her leather sling-bag and dug into it for her memo pad and monkey-grip gloves.

"Don't forget the whiskey-flavored lipstick," said one.

"And let's get the assignments posted on schedule this term," Lewy said disgustedly. "Give us a break, willya, Iv."

But Sylvia scowled. They were watching her as she searched her purse and much to her annoyance all she could discover

there at the moment was a pair of year-old ticket stubs for *End-game*, several subway tokens plus one Canadian dime, a mashed packet of king-sized Kents, a button declaring for a Liberal Party candidate, and a final subversive pamphlet, of which she felt more glowingly ashamed than anything else she had so far unearthed, *How to Do the Twist*.

Three

Across in Calhoun Hall the top action meeting, as Vogel had described it, was preparing to get under way. A throng of gray-faced figures, whose perfect anonymity of appearance personified the celebrated academic vows (poverty, bibliography, and jargon), were making slowly for Convocation Room. There was something in the air. It was evident in the overcareful way in which everyone avoided talking publicly about the Affair Bunch. Eschewing the invariably overcrowded elevator, and such niceties alike, two members fell into step up the iron stairs.

In their late thirties these twin academics, physically dissimilar, were temperamentally akin. Men who in most other professions would have been hard in mid-career (the English "Fud" notoriously taking longer than Chemistry, Engineering, or Law equivalents), both were characteristic of their class. Both had begun undergraduate work before America's entry into the war—bespectacled Hoyd Rushzak, the taller of the two, still in his summer seersucker, had briefly been an infantry officer in Italy and had shared some shrapnel in the left leg, laming him a little as a result. With boyish moon-face, Hoyd generally—and in particular now—wore a protective smile of sarcasm. About a year ago he had had a closish crew-cut and his hair had been slow in growing out. In Chaucerian English he had a not head. The description always delighted him.

"Good program this term, Ax?"

"Mostly Intros to Lit." Axel Maine, his darker, more hustled-looking companion, spoke with resignation. He was a medium-sized married bachelor with tough hair and shrewd, tanned features.

"Ah me," said Hoyd. "What would America do without her Humanities courses? For one thing our space scientists wouldn't know what to call all their rockets and missiles. By Hera, no. Beth well?"

"All right."

Although Axel had also, like Hoyd, collected a wife en route, he had not improvidently pupped—the Rushzaks had four infants already. Both men, in any case, had one way or another been forced into that sweatshop of higher education in New York City, those constant classes garnered from this institution or that which, when taught after long hours under the bug-hunting governesses of the graduate mill, made the effort of any thought simply out of the question. Now, clinging to their straw of security at Lincoln, they breathed again. Hoyd might even think again. He might, just so long as he didn't deceive himself into imagining those pieces he published with decreasing frequency in the literary magazines constituted thought. For his part Axel didn't care. He had done his stint of botanical criticism, got his tenure, and that was that.

"Took me an hour to park," he commented angrily as they plodded up another flight. He, too, had admired German precision instruments at close quarters in the war, and had recently substantiated his respect by investing in a Volks. "Parking here's becoming murder."

Though Hoyd didn't have a car, had to limp his way to school each day, he knew his friend had a point. "I see your point," he, in fact, said. The parking rules were extraordinarily devious at Lincoln and so as to show democratic, only a very few senior professors, like the late Dr. Bunch for instance, were accorded special permits by Dean Pin. The remaining spaces were be-

spoke by the students long before the seven A.M. classes even. Axel frequently complained about this, pointing out that there were dozens of Lincoln students these days who were knocking back in their spare time twice as much a month as any Assistant Professor anywhere. Hoyd panted round a turn. He removed his pipe to mutter, "When you've been in this dump a decade, Ax, you get treated like an elevator operator. After twenty, if you're lucky, you may get treated like a student."

They had made the ninth floor and paused now in unison. Axel's little heart was thudding fast. He reached into a trouser pocket. The medieval doors of Convocation Room ahead, a-jostle with members, were open wide but doors at Lincoln always made a man reach for his keys. He murmured back to Hoyd: "Christ, we've got to do something for Orrin. We can't let them get away with this. I hope to God Mac has this thing high on the agenda." For he could just see the Departmental Secretary now, lanky Mac Hamrin, horn-rims winking, chatting with a friend inside the doors.

"A more than usually monstrous piece of injustice from on high," Hoyd calmly agreed. "However, I have it on good authority that this time we're going to put our feet down hard. Seymour'll get some action. He knew Orrin, you see."

So saying, Hoyd heaved forward to clasp the Chairman's hand. Seymour Katzman, eyes darting off a negligible nose, stood by one of the doors, greeting members. Axel was about to approach him, too, when the Lawrence expert burst upon him like a gale. "Ah Lorenzaccio!" He did his best to feign enthusiasm, as arm in arm they passed through the double doors.

Altogether there were close on two hundred salaried members of the English staff at Lincoln College. All men. No Chairman in his right mind would engage a lady to cope with municipal college classes; why, there were Lincoln engineers like Mark De Vayo who had been sued for breach of promise by their high school teachers already. Many of the members were academic hacks engaged on Ph.D.'s and called in annually to man the

breach of endless composition courses, summoned, in short, to bolster a thin red line against the perpetually wilder depredations made by the New York high schools. Those odds and sods were not allowed to vote and thus, while not excluded from, were not encouraged to, special meetings such as this. All the same, Axel saw some hundred and twenty peaked faces, he guessed, as he entered the amphitheater, disentangled himself from Lorenzo, and slipped into a seat beside smallish Bill Beobach. Bill was currently on a Jung jag and saw an anima everywhere.

Seymour Katzman came in almost immediately afterwards and called the meeting to order. Secretary Hamrin shut the door and sat on Katzman's right, smoking his Sherlock Holmes pipe and exposing a natty vest. There were a few preliminary matters to clear up first—congratulations and commiserations, a change of punctuation in the catalog description of one of the survey courses, the death of the Department cat, named Niobe, at which all stood, another proposed program in Business English.

“But no one knows how to teach this Business English, Sey.”

“I fear that scarcely prevents us from offering a new course in the subject, Ned.”

“No one knows anything about it,” came back another voice.

“Move that we postpone discussion of Business English 17/18?” the Chairman invited of them all.

“So moved.”

“Second.”

“Moved, seconded, all in favor?”

A tired growl. The threat of Business English 17/18 was, they trusted, postponed another year—or until the customary fiat from above.

“We thus arrive at the matter of Professor Bunch, who has so sadly left us,” Katzman began after the curricular threats had been exorcized.

The Chairman was a deceptive one. Facially unimpressive, with his winking pince-nez and thinning hair, he had been for

over thirty years engaged in compiling a dictionary in the *field* of American argot—Pennsylvania Dutch, to be precise. Axel knew there was real fiber in the man. In any case, he had for many years held together in tolerable amity a large group of those whose occupational backbiting and general cattishness were widely celebrated.

“I hope the sense of this meeting is that we ought to do something for Orrin,” he began.

A large man wearing a bulging tweed jacket with sateeny tie, a shirt flecked with a diamonded design, grotesque shoes and chocolate gabardine trousers, rose to speak. He was a Full Professor. His name was Norwell Cramm, and he was adept at writing articles on how “vulgar” certain eighteenth century English poets were.

“Norwell?”

“*Mister Chairman.*” The big man faced his audience. “I think before we go any further, before we even start to discuss or debate this matter in the open, in fact, we ought, as a procedural detail, to consider in all good conscience, the, ah, overall picture in this you might say particular area, we ought, uh, to realize, that is—and it’s absolutely in order and perfectly okay for us to do this—just what the laws are regarding the legal arrangements we are working under here. Employmentwise.” He sat dogmatically. There was a respectfully puzzled silence.

Katzman frowned. “I take it you’re referring to the Silck Law, Norwell?”

“That’s what I said.”

“I can’t see how that comes into it, either procedurally or otherwise. Orrin was suspended for ‘conduct unbecoming to a teacher.’ He wasn’t dismissed for political activity.”

“Maybe not exactly.”

“Not at all.” Katzman spoke sharply. “Not under the Silck Law.”

“How do we know?” cut in another, younger voice. “What’s the difference? We all suspect this may simply be Council’s new

method of making it easy for themselves. After all those cases of suspension a few years ago, and resultant public outcry, this other clause is easier. They don't have to explain in public."

"Is it impossible to get anything definite from the President?"

The Chairman smiled. "Kenneth, Appius, and I were in to see the President two days ago. Frankly, either he's a clever actor or he really is as entirely in the dark about this one as we are."

"Sure he heard you, Sey?" Laughter. The President's deafness was celebrated.

"But doesn't the man concerned *have* to know? By the bylaws, that is."

"No, apparently not."

There was a break in the discussion. One faction of the Department, antipathetic to Katzman and his cronies, had been strong in their suspicions all along that not only the President but also their own Departmental Chairman were fully apprised of the facts of the professor's suspension. It was for precisely that reason Seymour had taken with him two members notoriously of the opposite camp, including Appius Claudius, as Enoch Hill was called, a bland-faced Bostonian fond of talking about the necessity for roots, which he pronounced *ruts*.

"I think it'd be wraung," agreed Appius now, fairly wringing out his last word, "to assume that CCMCE have infahrmed the President."

A smallish teacher arose from among the reasonably senior seats in front, a man who might have been Byronically distinguished but for his lack of inches, since his broad forehead sheered steeply back and his shaggy mane, still distantly golden, yearningly retreated over a sprawling collar. There was a leonine scowl on his face.

"Mer-move that we send for the President."

Katzman smiled indulgently: "My dear Mesrob, I doubt that we're empowered to go quite that far." The President, everyone knew, was a sort of senescular groper gifted with a string of unearned degrees—including a Philo Ph.D. from Goslar University

—who would probably pass out if summoned at short notice anywhere.

Another voice: "A perfectly pointless action, not to mention completely unprecedented."

"And why not?"

Another in agreement: "It was a pretty unprecedented action on the part of CCMCE to haul a member out of his classroom, wasn't it? They might have waited till the end of the hour."

Mesrob Mins was striving with his lips. "I do most urgently mer-move," he stammered at last, "that this Deputtmment resign en masse. In a body. As of now. In most strong protest."

Interest barely quickened about the room. They were used to Mes and his improbable heroisms. Besides, there were pensions to consider. The man sat down in scarlet silence. Axel Maine knew that the real trouble with this meeting was going to be that no one had much known or liked the suspended doctor, not to mention that he had the reputation of being eminently able to look after himself.

Then Seymour Katzman said quietly, surveying the surface of the table over which he leant, "Do I perhaps hear a proposal that this Department unanimously recommend to the President the immediate reinstatement of Professor Bunch?"

And all at once the fight was on.

"Sey, *most* unwise."

"I positively refuse to lend my . . ."

"Mister Chairman."

"Highly rash."

". . . no such thing."

"Christamighty, man, we gotta . . ."

"Point of information."

A sheaf of hands.

Seymour Katzman selected one pudgy one. "Ned?"

"I think we all here know, we're perfectly aware, I mean, that Dr. Bunch subscribed to *Science and Society*."

"What!"

"Orrin never subscribed to anything in his life, Ned," cut in someone quickly.

"No, I saw it on his desk. A copy on his desk. Right before . . ."

"That proves precisely nothing."

"No, I think we're all aware of the political crisis the country's in at the moment. At a moment of national emergency like this, and of crisis, our backs to the wall . . ."

Ned Meilberg was an ex-Russian ex-Jew and he hated Russia as only an ex-Russian, ex-Marxist, American-naturalized ex-Jew (who wanted to write like Henry James) can hate Russia. Even if, thought Axel as he watched Meilberg's sweating pate and studied the monstrous red wings of those visibly jerking earlobes, Ned was by some horrible mistake of fate correct, he knew he would never agree with him. The intonations of his speech, coupled with the invective of his black eyes whenever he made his stresses, gave Axel no confidence whatever. Since he himself had by now learned that it was impossible (a) to debate without heat with Ned and (b) to debate at all without dragging in, somewhere along the line, either politics or plagiarism (his twin pet subjects), he tended to avoid the man more and more.

There was something suspect in all this excitability. During the height of the McCarthy hearings Ned had been known seriously to propagate the idea that those Star Chamber sessions were in reality a sign of America's strength, since only a powerful country could allow such self-criticism. *Ergo* they were a token of freedom. An ex-liberal little magazine that specialized in such craven pronouncements had in fact printed Ned on the matter, copiously. Now, never himself having been in the slightest doubt as to the intentions of Stalin and his co-rogues, Axel saw no need to be verbally bludgeoned into an opinion he'd always accepted as axiomatic anyway. And here was Uncle Nedward protesting too much all over again.

"Hiss, Lattimore, the Rosenbergs. . . ." Ned appeared to writhe as his muzzle moved about, his tone gathering speed as

he drove onwards, douching them with dozens of names, plus a potpourri of phrases such as "defeatist neutralism" or "leftist neurosis," which he presumably imagined meant something or other.

For this celebrated "liberal" (lion of the *New Leader*) had, in fact, as Digger Davies had only lately remarked to Axel, been fired from pretty well everything except Cape Canaveral. Finally, in middle age, he had found a fairly frantic haven at Lincoln, where he had lain doggo for the requisite number of years before being awarded tenure and an Assistant Professorship. For, to succeed in a civil-service institution like Lincoln, it was imperative not to shine in any way whatsoever. Any form of early prominence—via literary activity, say—was highly dangerous to a young hopeful there. It was *controversial* or—worst of all—*rocking the boat*. (Ah, the squealing in the city high schools when the notion of "merit" promotions was bruited abroad.) The thing to do was stay quiet as a cat and the system, as set for mediocrity as other city systems, would carry you to the top in no time at all. Like yeast, you could only rise. In this the municipal colleges differed considerably from the private institutions, especially from the publish-or-perish Departments of the Eastern seaboard.

Now Axel so hoped Ned wasn't going to start chucking his weight about: if only he'd run along and play at one of those reverse-twist articles of his ("The Baroque in C. P. Snow"), or spend more of his energy on those vignettes of childhood in old Austria which *The New Yorker* seemed to enjoy printing, but no. The potential of latent Communism in the Bunch affair—that closet horror they all so dreaded—this was right up Ned's alley, it was clear, he was a specialist in the vice, and he let the meeting know it now, shaking his subject like a terrier and concluding ("Lattimore, the Sobles, *Hiss*!") with a dying bite against the advisability of writing anything into the minutes at all on behalf the suspended professor.

"Ah-boot the matter of Professor Bunch's private affiliations,"

boomed in Bostonian Appius Claudius, "I have it on excellent awthawritty . . ."

"Orrin hadn't the slightest interest in politics," snapped an exasperated voice, rapidly identified by Axel as coming from Ralph "Digger" Davies, an entirely oriented instructor with no intellectual ambitions whatsoever.

"How do you know?" snapped another.

"We must stick behind our members. Heavens, if we can't . . ."

"Ro?" Katzman indicated a flailing mitt.

"Mr. Chairman, I wish to in fact politely suggest that precisely the best we can do for Professer er-Bunch at this time is unanimously enter a vote of confidence in him as a teacher, on behalf the entire Department."

"What the hell use is that to him?"

"Be better start a fund to pay his legal fees, I'd have thought," Axel found himself discontentedly interjecting.

"Before I subscribe to any such statement," a throttled voice shouted from the back, "I would prefer to know a trifle more about our learned colleague, please. His past associations, memberships, interests, clubs, if you please."

"Christamighty, man," and Lorenzo hopped elastically to his feet, "if we can't lay it on the line to that extent for Orrin Bunch, if we can't do that for one of our own kind, well hell." He sat down, bubbling.

Tiredly, it seemed, Katzman inquired: "Do you want to put your suggestion in the form of a motion, Roman?"

The speaker who now balanced himself on the balls of his feet was a chipper little chap, almost perpetually sending out off-prints. Professor Roman Gladberg's trim figure was of medium height, his silver hair wavy, he wore pince-nez and dressed with the care becoming a speed-shaver salesman, usually (as today) in suits of royal blue, agonizingly overpressed and always slightly shiny.

"You wish me to completely specify . . ."

"If you would."

There came a clearing of the throat. This scholar's dusty field was Akenside, Prior, and the like, he had made subtle evaluations of minor poets of the period and churned out some half-dozen subventioned volumes. But the air here was becoming rarefied, and to tell the truth there was little more to say about most of the poets Roman specialized in, a number of whom were pretty empty to start off with. He was thus forced into publishing minute studies of the secondary, or even tertiary, criticism of such in quaint journals, which he did with compulsive frequency, deluging his colleagues with copies. It was really amazing how Roman dug up some of the magazines he published in—last term he'd appeared as the leading light of a bibliographical newsletter emanating from Akra, for instance—and Axel knew that at least once a month in the coming year something from Roman would show up in his mailbox.

Speaking with precision, and avoiding those figures with which he sometimes liked to belabor his Departmental deliveries, Roman now moved—"that this Department wishes to in fact signalize its confidence. . . ."

Someone asked querulously, "Don't you think, Ro, that *signalize* might be a trifle vivid?"

"Too lively," agreed another.

"Picturesque."

Roman rode on: ". . . wishes to absolutely record its perfect confidence in the complete integrity and loyalty of Professor Orrin Bunch."

Here a benevolent, fattish figure, smaller than his suitcase, so it seemed, bumped into Convocation Room wound in a woolen scarf. Whirling a little, he apologized excessively to the air and seated himself with a far too audible plop at the back. Both Hoyd and Axel smiled in friendly recognition toward the Department's tame Bloom, their passionate Joycean trying to live down his German degrees. Following this interruption several hands were seen aloft. Katzman appeared to be lost in thought.

"Seriously, Sey, we ought to consider this. I mean, we have a touchy subject here."

"Before going on record in this manner."

And another cried: "I don't like that phrasing of 'complete integrity.' Integrity's an absolute. Like, like uniqueness, or obscenity. You either have it or you haven't."

And another, on a note of discovery, "That word *loyalty*, Sey. What does it mean? Mightn't that take us right out of our province altogether? None of us knew Bunch too well. All we can enter in the minutes here, I believe, is some general reference to him as a teacher. Not as a person."

"Moved that we insert 'integrity as a teacher?'" asked Katzman quickly.

"Now wait a minute, that's an iffy question, Sey . . ."

"And the word *confidence*—oughtn't we to consider what that implies? If I'm not mistaken (and I'm ready to be checked against Webster) the word entails some measure or degree of entrustment, commitment. We might find ourselves way out on a limb there, you know."

We might indeed, thought Axel, we might even find ourselves helping the guy, when suddenly about three members were on their feet. One was Hoyd but another got in first—"Right. Entirely depends on what you mean by the word."

In the silence, and speaking hoarsely, Hoyd said, "Is this really all we can do? Orrin was physically thrust out of his classroom."

The third on his feet was the young Digger Davies. He contented himself with gazing unbelievably around for a moment and then, when Katzman singled him out, abruptly sitting down.

"Mr. Chairman." Sigmund Fleisch was unsuccessfully, as usual, striving for attention. Instead a senior member impressed himself on Katzman's eye.

"Wouldn't it be wisest to insert some such phrase as 'to the best of our knowledge'?"

"Or 'as far as we know.'"

And Appius Claudius: "Such phrasing . . . within the college community . . . we don't want to offend any groups."

And Norwell Cramm: "*Mister Chairman.* If we look at the overall pattern of this, ah, basis of opinion, and, uh, comparable discussions, my feelings are that if we're to understand each other—and it's vital that we you might say do—then, based on our individual programs here, it's imperative each one of us consider the whole picture, including (I'm referring to traditions at, ah, *other* municipal institutions) our duty to back the Council. That is, put our shoulders to the wheel and carry this thing down the fairway for, uh, the duration of term. Ah."

And Bill Beobach: "A combination of fantasy repressions, like Orrin's, coupled with defense projections from the shadow-figure . . ."

"The shadow-figure, Bill?" Katzman frowned.

Ned Meilberg said: "You do have it on the record, Mac, that I personally object. Put that in the minutes, please."

And others said: "It entirely depends on what you mean by the word."

And others said: "I see your point."

"I suggest 'as far as we might be held to know.'"

"I suggest 'to our known knowledge.' That better circumscribes our ability."

"Christamighty, man," gulped Lorenzo suddenly. But it was all he said.

"Mr. Chairman. Is 'to our knowledge' strictly grammatical?" Appius asked. "In Borston the prepositional adverbial phrase of extent . . ."

They were getting into their stride, it was plain, when Mesrob arose and with an angry contempt spat out—"I resign."

Quite what for or from, how or why, such was unclear, and no one took much notice of this reasonably routine outburst. It did, however, have the effect of stirring Norwell Cramm to his lumbering feet again:

"*Mister Chairman.* If we look at the overall pattern of this, ah,

basis of opinion and, uh, comparable civic discussions—any rash or slightly hasty step. . . .”

Axel watched this blabbermouth orate with considerable admiration. To say so little in so many words was a gift that came in useful in the modern state. A chorus of “Hear, hears” from parliamentarians followed as Norwell resumed his ample seat. It was already apparent that the idea of seeking Dr. Bunch’s reinstatement, put up earlier by Katzman, was getting nowhere at all.

Axel himself had given up hope. A confirmed Martiniac, he was wondering whether he could hold the line to only four this evening when he got back home. By bad luck rather than good management, Axel had married above his station. His wife Beth, a plain, washed-out woman, was the daughter of a retired Brigadier who still lived in the atmosphere described in *Reflections in a Golden Eye*. This handsome ex-officer, with his cardboard carriage and gray, clipped mustaches, played blackjack with his wife or innocently stalked the three acres of his Nebraska “estate” in soot-hued boots. At first he had liked the idea of Beth marrying into academic life, picturing her pouring tea when she wasn’t knitting socks for charity. Then he had visited New York and seen Lincoln, and the kind of rat race Axel actually led. Stiff as a bristle, he had sat in the Maines’ one decently upholstered chair for several evenings on end (while Axel himself should by rights have been correcting compositions) saying nothing, and consuming quantities of costly rye. Finally, he had left with the single comment—“You’ve got to get out of this, m’boy.” Since when, Axel had been tormented by the necessity for removing Beth into the country. Weekend after weekend they had clipped the real estate pages of the *Times* and headed for Connecticut. But property there was now far beyond any Assistant Professorial pocket. Axel was stuck with it in the city for quite a while yet.

More members were speaking. There were those in the English Department who couldn’t rise to their feet without declining into periods, mixed metaphors (like Norwell), logodaedaly and all. They were now deliberating the “appropriateness” of the punc-

tuation of the suggested recommendation for the suspended professor. Axel slipped Hoyd a slip of paper. His "Gung Ho! The Gas Trust!" came back sympathetically superscribed by that individual: "Is't not possible to understand in another tongue?"

"R. J. C." Katzman singled out the new speaker.

"Mr. Chairman, gentlemen, I think we should be extremely careful before we in any way collectively endorse. . . ."

Axel reacted. His emotions leaped backwards, hissing inside him at these comatose accents. Full Professor R. J. C. Phipps looked like an actor searching for the set of *The Four Feathers*. He was fifty-three years old, and in facial expression parodied the pukka sahib. A white pompadour with "distinguished" recession at the temples, a forehead creased by a line of perpetually impending thought, lucid cheeks and waxed mustaches. In Boodle's or White's such a stereotype would have been laughed out of court in an instant (shown the staff door, perhaps), but in the arena in which R. J. C. now chiefly operated, that of the Madison Avenue book pimp, a fair amount of ham was in order and the ensemble was evidently effective. These past years, there was no denying, R. J. C. had gone from strength to strength and his entry in the register of American Oxonians was a paean to the things of this world. But Axel knew him as a mortal enemy.

"In brief, Mr. Chairman, I know that none of us here wants to *rock the boat*."

With this concluding sally, a highly connotative one in the present assemblage, there was little left of Roman's motion. Several who had classes were glancing at their watches. Katzman seemed to have shrunk. Axel looked on with little more than curiosity as a hairless and painfully thin professor approaching fifty, wearing a well-cut suit, arose to speak.

"Paul."

Paul Kristoff was the senior representative of what was tacitly, yet universally, admitted in the Department as the fairy wing, and all watched to learn on which side this contingent would place its tender weight. Paul was a plausible don, versed in the

Marprelate controversy, and, after a succession of balletic gestures at the ceiling, he spoke against entering anything "in any way final, definitive or committal *at this present juncture*." Then, eyes skidding, he settled his scant bottom back on its seat. Lorenzo leaned back toward little Bill Beobach and Axel heard him whisper crossly, "Though I don't agree with what you say, I'll defend to the death your right to slay it." Indeed, it was all over now bar the shouting—the customary aye's for adjournment, in the strongest known rhythm of the Department's consent—and the gathering broke up, members patting each other on the back over good work got through with dispatch. The top action meeting was over. Only the Chair, in the person of Seymour Katzman, stayed put, in contemplative solitude.

At the break-up Axel looked for Hoyd, only to find his friend buttonholed by Harvey Spiller, the keen little Creative Writing teacher, eager to give Hoyd a few last hints on how to sell the textbook the lame professor had been readying through the summer. Axel found himself walking disgustedly down the emptier half of the corridor to the john when the girl in glasses accosted him. She seemed familiar.

"Professor Maine?"

"Main Axel is me." He discarded the usual dozen or so stale jokes on his name. "Improbable I know, but correct."

"Might I have a word with you?"

"Sure." With obligatorily attentive smile he keyed himself for what this slave-bangled student might have to say. "Miss?"

"Hantmann."

The name struck a chord. "Of course. You're in my Intro to Lit, aren't you?"

She nodded. "I work for *Eagle*."

"I see." He'd thought as much the first time he'd seen her in class, with blistered eyes, and No-Doz pallor, a late-night-at-the-printer's look which, together with a shaggy appearance in the males, made student journalists stand out a mile. Still, she was a sturdy lass in that emphatic one-piece of hers, a dress that a

skin-diver might have found tolerably suffocating. He recalled glancing at her body once or twice in class.

“We’re running a feature on the Bunch case.”

“Fine.”

“I understand the English Department just refused to vote him a motion of confidence.”

Axel smiled. “My, you’re a fast worker, Miss Hantmann. Or, shall we say, an attentive listener.”

“We’re interested in some statements from the faculty, Mr. Maine.” She corrected herself, a shade too obviously. “*Dr.* Maine.”

“Well?”

“Could you give us your opinion of Professor Bunch, something we could quote?”

“Frankly, I only knew him most vaguely. I can’t have spoken to the man more than half a dozen times, as a matter of fact.”

“I see.” Was there a smile on those young lips, wondered Axel in increasing annoyance. “So you’d rather *not* be quoted? Dr. Maine.”

He felt himself tensing. “It’s not that I don’t want to be quoted, it’s just that I haven’t anything to say.” More warmly than he liked, he added, “I tell you I scarcely saw the guy from one day to the next. Our hours always seem to have been different anyway.”

“I see.” Another pause. Studied? The girl’s chest rose and fell. Considerably. “But don’t you think the forcible removal . . . ?”

“I don’t know. I don’t know why Dr. Bunch was dismissed. None of us do, it seems. Until we do, I prefer to suspend judgment.”

Her ponytail swung. “Wouldn’t you call his replacement a *scab*?”

“Would I?” Angered at having found himself forced by the artificiality of this kid’s clichés into the same position he had so despised during the meeting, he seized the chance to switch the subject: “Anyway, are you sure he’s been replaced?”

She reddened, lids lowered. "That's a nice safe thing to say, isn't it?"

"What do you mean?" Axel retorted roughly.

"You prefer not to comment on the Bunch case." He was presented now with a "patient" gaze: but as she tucked the note pad conspicuously in her bag, even her neck had gone quite dark. Axel's interest in her suddenly leaped. "I understand. Another frightened little boy is going to play it safe. Straight down the middle of the street."

"What!" he exclaimed hotly.

"One can't blame you," she continued indulgently.

By heaven, she was being sarcastic now. The irritation this ridiculous "girl reporter" had started in him threatened to trigger off all the steam Axel had accumulated during that gathering of numbskulls, knuckleheads and fuddyduds just now.

"Look here, Miss Hantmann, we've just been through a long meeting on the problem. What's in it for me happened to be far from the philosophy of a number of us, I assure you."

The infuriating thing was to be made to feel so exasperated with the democratic conceit in this manner; it was only at Lincoln you had to take this sort of sauce from a student, and smile. His eyes traveled to her long legs, and the gilt chain round one lean ankle.

But despite her efforts at calm she was too excited now herself. "Don't annoy the big boys," she put in somewhat wildly and the temptation to up-end this chain-smoking columnist and paddle her well-shod rear plaza proved almost too much for Axel. A shred of spittle from her last speech clung, he saw, to his open coat. He thought of Beth and he looked at the cheeky curves of this co-ed's can.

"Run away and read Marx's *Criticism of the Gotha Program*, why don't you?"

"Bunch was Jewish, wasn't he?"

Sharply he turned. She looked back at him, smoking and smiling hard, a calculating glare. Jew to Goy. He realized that if the

students full-nelsoned the racial interpretation on this thing, matters might turn ugly. He also realized that the time had come to put a close to his conversation with Miss Hantmann.

"I don't know," he said. "Why waste your time and mine by adding salt to the bacon? I haven't any idea what Dr. Bunch's religion was, or even if he had one."

He shrugged and went toward the pair of Lincoln-yellow doors. The first had on it MEN, the second FACULTY, and after an instant's pause it was the former Axel today elected, for his pent-up leak.

The individual, dight "Lecturer (?)" as a sarcastic Munich cousin chose to address him, who had burst into the meeting halfway through, now left that chamber in signal disarray. Insecure (never on tenure) Sigmund Fleisch realized he had forgotten a class. For him this was not out of the ordinary, and anyway he had the excuse this time of its being a take-over assignment, the very English 1 from which the late Bunch had been removed. Yet Sigmund's heart was thudding at his overweight chest in an unusual manner as he bundled down the stairs toward the outer offices of the English Department. What's worse, he hadn't had time for lunch. And Sigmund was a gourmet yet.

During the latter phases of the meeting *Sehrgemeingeboener-herr* Fleisch had felt impelled to rise to his feet and risk his future, if necessary, in a few words in Bunch's defense. Even if only a token statement. But he had let the opportunity slip. He had let many opportunities slip. Rather feverishly. Moreover, this kind of injustice was to Sigmund, coming from where he came from, not entirely not to be expected of the world. There was a certain resignation necessary. That was why he adored James Joyce. That was why he had just contributed a recklessly lavish sum to the fund for preserving the Martello Tower.

Bounding into the Department's outer offices he sought his stick and books. With luck he could just make it. The first room, however, was paved with cartons of texts that had accumulated for members during the summer solstice. Sigmund reflected that

these stacks containing literally hundreds of "desk" or sample copies could be retailed in the area of several thousand dollars. What waste! Two-thirds of them would be tossed aside unopened. And such money could be used in Dublin all right.

A typewriter stopped its stutter. Sigmund teetered. Pretty Miss Wilmer, Departmental steno, glanced up with a hand on the barrel of her machine.

"Meeting over, Dr. Fleisch?"

Beaming under the appellation, one he had been striving for thirteen years to attain, he replied, "Over, yes."

Miss Wilmer's fingers twitched a tea bag. "There's a class for you in . . ."

"Just make it," he threw at her from the door. "I'm a *little* late." He hastened out, winding his long wool scarf round his neck against the unusual cold of the day outside and making for the elevator. In the crush he smiled, bowing to various members in bobs that spoke of a bowel-churning anxiety about his job. Yes, on the whole, perhaps it had been best not to have spoken. Already, his mitteleuropean nose sensed, the Department was breaking up into pro- and contra-Bunch divisions. Better to be out of it, indeed. Maybe UFT would help. But oh, monstrous, monstrous. The doors gaped. Students poured out, carrying him with them. He hopelessly cursed. Forgotten his roll. No time now.

What a pace! The old idea of intellectual inquiry, of undergraduates being driven to the library by ideas rather than assignments, on which Sigmund had been brought up in Old Europe, such was about as far from these univied haunts as Yuma or the Folies Bergère. No Lincoln student ever had a minute, outside his routine work, to look about him and get educated: though in defense of the Administration he had to concede that if more time were granted them, the students would simply go all out and get more jobs. Still, the Administration, in old-fashioned Sigmund's honest opinion, increasingly substituted a symbol (grade) for the thing symbolized (education) in these municipal colleges.

Once again—why prevaricate? The average Lincoln student, the average State U. tech student, coming up from one of the big city high schools today, had never read a novel in his life, had never seen a legitimate play, let alone been in any way exposed to serious music or painting, unless accidentally. When he left his institution, a qualified engineer, he would be so busy earning money for his wife he would be most unlikely to take part in any of these activities again, except parenthetically at expense-account musical comedies or other forms of substitute sleep. Thus Sigmund resigned himself to another term of teaching the classics to students who would steadily and determinedly loathe literature from start to finish, blaming on it all their deficiencies in other subjects. Each year this courteous Bavarian sweated blood to combat the leisure-activity concept of the arts Lincoln engineers inherited, a philosophy which made any book requiring effort distinctly suspect. (Oh, those hated "hidden meanings"!) What, finally, was worst was that the more scientifically minded their other training became, the more poorly literature and art, which were nonpragmatic and could never be proved right or wrong, came off in their minds.

So Sigmund hastened out of Calhoun at the dumpy double, his striped Göttingen fencing scarf flying behind him. Classes in these first weeks troubled him terribly, in any case. Already he was in an agony of apprehension as he cantered across the flagstones, swinging his vaguely Joycean blackthorn in one hand, his worn, triangular teacher's suitcase in the other. One day Sigmund always hoped to stumble accidentally across the President and tell him he had known the great Schleppfuss at Goslar. Surely mention of the venerable name would assist Sigmund's prospects of tenure, for as a fleeting philo student there the President could not fail to have met the man who had put the *Angst* into Jaspers.

"Is yo' done yo' Greek yet, King?" amiably asked one colored student of another Sigmund shot by in his haste.

All summer long he had been hard at work on the sublime Dubliner, his dissertation (eternally to be) following literally

and figuratively in that master's celebrated *Wake*. Now it was almost certainly easier to write *Finnegans Wake* than it was to write about it, and Sigmund had been bogged (as he so appropriately put it) on a new, untouched vein of symbolic ore unearthed in the schoolroom scene, a dexterous analogy, he believed, via a recurrence of the Black Hand, with the twelfth-century portions of *Brut-y-Tywysogion*. How pleased his Columbia advisor would be when he showed him this *trouvaille!* Finding symbols in Joyce was like pulling charms from a pudding. The best boy got the most. But first of all Sigmund had to be *certain* he was right, and while making certain he sweated out the possibility of someone, somewhere else, getting in first. Luckily, communication with Joyce was now restricted; the mage could not personally be appealed to over such scholastic ingenuities.

For instance, there had been that distressing lapse—for all who ride to read—on the printed sleeve of a recording of *Ulysses*, where the expicator took Bloom's reference to a “French letter,” the meaning of which would have been more than evident to any English schoolboy, to refer to continental correspondence. There had been some other nicely nonexistent points made with amazing syntactical address here and there, including a New Critical thrashing of a poem that was actually a parody, the Brinnin-Friar reading of Nerval's Biron for the poet Byron (and the possibility of a lovely elaboration of references thereafter), plus of course the usual gorgeous acrobatics over Yeats's *Among School Children*, a version of which had corrupted “Solider” to “Soldier” Aristotle? If such moments, thought Sigmund, made teaching worthwhile, they also showed you simply couldn't be too careful in matters of the sort.

Yes, all in all, Sigmund felt distastefully terrified by the outlines of the Bunch buzz. Keep out of it, if he could. Now, his steps dragging him (as it were instinctively) library-wards, he would have loved to check on the new issue of *The Joyce Review*, which should surely be out by now, before going to class. But there was no time. He was late already.

Then it was, hesitating before the statue of Einstein, he heard the music. His striped scarf trailing, socks slopping over his ankles, Sigmund hearkened, entranced. He knew every silver, liquid note. Rapturously he gazed into the transformed air, past the wild, childish face of the relativity wiz (into whose hands the sculptor had seen fit to set a T-square), up, up, up to the window from which those notes so sourcelessly streamed. Music Department. All two rooms of it. Grieg's Sonata in E for Piano, Opus 7. Performer forcing the pace a little? Perhaps. But the world went tepid for an instant, nothing mattered any more. Sigmund even stopped perspiring for a while.

Then, with lurching groan, he heard the vilely interrupting vocables. A toted transistor set. "Powered by the sun," no doubt. He frowned feloniously at the sacrilege. Some barbarian of a Chemistry major—so Sigmund murderously imagined him to be—swung contentedly by. Sounded like "Temptation" in Swahili. Sigmund's wide-winged nose curled upwards at the corner. He glanced at his watch. Four minutes after the hour. Panting, tripping over the tasseled tails of his scarf, he made the building in two minutes flat. Inside, as he tumbled downstairs, a squawk-box was going, summoning somebody on the staff in one of those incomprehensible iterations from "headquarters" that always made him feel constitutionally incapable and guilty. First, Orrin Bunch; second, Sigmund Fleisch. Perfect. He hurtled toward his basement room.

Here the forest of overhead pipes imparted the atmosphere of a ship. A ship out of control. He reached the room. But the birds had flown. Lincolnians were allowed to leave if their prof were five minutes late. Yet—so early in the term. So tired *already*, then? Just one minute, that was all. His hours of preparation in vain, for he would need to rehearse once more for the next period to come. Still, this was merely another crap course to them.

Sigmund sat down in the teacher's seat. On the table in front of him lay a delicatessen sandwich, soggy from dripping pickle

juice. On the blackboard behind had been written the words:
WE LEFT—JESSE ROY.

During Sigmund's Odyssey to class the other members had separated with their customary clannishness. Bill Beobach and Mac Hamrin fell into step toward the elevator. Through a door R. J. C.'s Singapore suit could be seen swanning off in the middle distance, and both men instinctively slowed. As they did so, Digger Davies joined them.

"A fine performance by our liberal intelligentsia," he snapped. "I've seen better heads on a glass of beer."

Bill and Mac refrained from comment. Digger's youthful forthrightness could be an embarrassment.

"Seymour still in Convocation Room?" Bill asked the Secretary severely.

"Who stepped on *his* face, I'd like to know?" Digger put in plaintively. He was burning to talk, that was plain. On the way out of Calhoun, indeed, Bill Beobach, conscious he had sat the fence over the fired professor, hurriedly excused himself. He lived in Greenwich and had to catch a train. Mac and Digger paced up the hill.

"Good summer, Dig?"

"Oh sure." With a scowl at the moat behind them he added, "What weather, huh. If those children at Washington will chuck their bombs about, what can you expect?"

But this reply again went rather far and, glasses gently garroting his neck, notes for the minutes under one arm, Hamrin mumbled, "Hmn."

They caught up an egg-bald figure in an overtailored suit.

"Hi, Paul."

"Ah, afternoon. Mac. Mr. Davies." Paul Kristoff exchanged polite smiles.

"Chilly today."

"Certainly is."

"You have a heat wave, then it turns to winter."

"It goes like that sometimes."

The caginess of these exchanges indeed revealed a characteristic of the city colleges, namely the lack of faculty fraternization on the social level, certainly in comparison with out-of-town institutions. Since all these professors were thrown so close, it was as if they insisted on playing remote, whereas in the cow colleges, on the great plains, or even in some of the New England coseries, you were equally busy pretending the community was smaller, less isolated, then it was.

"What are you doing this weekend, Paul?" Digger asked abruptly. At the use of the first name to such a senior Mac Hamrin shot the instructor a look. However, the fairy didn't take offense. Visibly.

"Well, now you ask, I plan to go fishing."

"You won't catch anything."

There was an awkward pause. Paul smiled. "I think I *will*."

"You won't."

The other paled in the frigid air, flounced a little, made a step or two, then came gamely back, "Mr. Davies, I al-ways catch."

There was another silence, then Digger said, "It's going to rain this weekend."

Mac Hamrin made a surreptitious signal, evidently in vain.

"It rained last year," Paul Kristoff pronounced, retaining the smile on his face, "and I caught."

"This year's different."

They walked on in silence a little, when Paul, puffing slightly, faced the stocky, curly-headed nonentity who was so impassively regarding him.

"Why do you say that?"

"This year, sir," Digger evenly pursued, "you just aren't going to catch any fish." He squared his shoulders. "You're not going to *have a ball* with those fish, that's all there is to it, Paul."

Kristoff checked himself. "But I will. Of course I will. I al-ways catch," he replied in agitation after a minute.

Hamrin pulled Digger on. They left the neuter staring at the

sidewalk. "You shouldn't have done that. You really mustn't bait Paul in that way, you know. This year, what with the Guggenheims and sabbaticals, they control the best part of a third of the Department."

"Oh, he's such a useless drip. Look at the way he hedged over Bunch like that. Hell, we started out with the idea of reinstating the man and ended up doing absolutely fanny adams at all."

Mac sighed. "We have to live with the law."

"What's any law got to do with this?"

They shook hands and parted, Hamrin for his home in Brooklyn Heights, a few doors from where Hart Crane had howled out his heart (now a dormitory for Jehovah's Witnesses). After standing still a minute Digger flagged a cab. "North," he said shortly. He was a man who asked few questions of life, being about as contented with American urban existence as possible. His apartment was a forest of gadgetry, kept in winking condition, and a visiting European of the genus that came over to write books on America from time to time would have termed his tastes (one, a bankrupt French urologist, actually did) those of an overgrown infant. At the moment, for instance, he was contentedly contemplating an evening playing Louis Prima plates and imbibing Scotch Mists. Digger himself knew he wouldn't always be happy in New York City but for the nonce it sufficed. He liked it a lot. Besides, he had a problem.

The driver wore a sludge of cigar.

"Boy, it's real chilly today."

Digger said nothing.

The driver answered himself on the turn. "You're not kidding."

As Digger still said nothing in reply he elucidated: "Got what I mean? This is a new car, see, the shift's stiff." A minute later, bunching forward with the concentration of a Lincoln student confronting Aristotle, he added on a note of concern—"Stiff. Car's new. Like there I go straight from first t'third, see." All at once he sat back. "Ah, who cares? It's not my rod, why should I worry, whadja say."

"Thanks." And as Digger paid the gabby cabbie he added inaudibly, Paddy Chayefsky.

He entered his apartment with tact.

"Genne?" he called. There was no reply. Discovering a shortage of Scotch he poured himself a glass of beer—so crisp-illy clear, so ic-illy right. He went into the bedroom. No signs. God.

He swallowed his beer, went back and poured another. Bibbidi bobbidi. Idly he ran his eye over the forty-seven composition papers he had brought back to correct. This was getting grisly. Should he quit, go elsewhere? The years were pushing on. It wasn't much fun starting as an Instructor at thirty-three; and, truth be told, he hadn't had any offers.

"Geneviève," he called again. She wasn't there and wouldn't be there, it was no good his trying to pretend she would. For Digger Davies' intact normality concealed one glaring flaw: a beautiful wife and a rotten salary.

He sat there in the stillness, looking at the papers with the feeling of someone inspecting the first ciphers of a new civilization, rather than the codicils of the old. For the scientists of Lincoln—of America, Russia, China and even Africa to come—were learning to consider the symbolic and physiological as one. For them the world was actual as—yes—concretely perceived. In higher science the symbols and designs needed to explore this world were substitutes, surrogates for reality, and satisfactory in proportion to their response to that reality. This was all very fine, said depressed Digger, except that it had nothing to do with being human. He wondered if he could take a lifetime fighting for anachronisms. Was there time to get out of it still? By Christ, that meeting had sickened him thoroughly. Oh day of the rabblement, where was his wife?

Although he would never have admitted it to himself, the Bunch affair had frightened Digger Davies. The occult nature of the whole was already alarming, after all. He wondered if he ought to read the Regents Rules on Subversive Activities to discover whether having a wife like Genne disqualified you from

subsisting on a city payroll. He drank another beer and rescanned the names on the blue books, instinctively fending off the moment when he would have to knuckle down and correct them. Thank God I'm fighting fit physically, was what he told himself. Those names!

Digger Davies was a white Protestant, i.e., an orthodox heretic—pace Mary McCarthy—and his short experience at a city college had so far taught him that of the various racial and religious groups his students would be drawn from, the following generalizations would normally apply: the Jewish element, forming the major part of each class, would be by far the most intelligent, receptive, liberal, and generally undogmatic. The white Protestant, a reasonably *rara avis*, would be less nervously excitable and belligerently competitive than his Jewish counterpart and he would be somewhat more punctual in his work habits—moreover, he wouldn't require each classroom in winter to resemble nothing less than a Turkish bath at full blast. The Negro group, equally small, would be equally amenable to discipline and, personality-wise, the least neurotic and most relaxed and perhaps likable citizens of the lot; however, for one reason or another, they usually came up horribly prepared by their high schools and, in English composition at least, often next to illiterate. Then there was the Catholic cadre, second in size to the Jewish and taught to be touchy as all get-out; this group would be subdivided into, as a rule, Italian and Irish Catholics (few Puerto Ricans having yet hit the city colleges). The Italians—especially if recent immigrants—presented no problem at all, though they weren't generally very bright. But the latter were easily the most stupid, conservative, reactionary, and closed-minded part of any class. They also formed, via clubs like the Newman, that section which screamed *meila moida* with steady relish at the pyrrhic freedoms of the academy and each year's "subversive" discoveries. Fortunately for all concerned, most of these lads were so dumb, only a sprinkling ever graduated to the colleges at all, where they rapidly tended to be civilized. But there was no use pussy-

footing the problem: secretly teachers all over this city and others were combing their class cards with dread for names like O'Grady and Sullivan and McNamara. Finally, it stood to reason that since governmental agencies were now being endowed to "ferret out" Communist students in city colleges, there were hardly any about. Back in the thirties maybe, but nowadays the very occasional Commie who might conceivably show up in a Lincoln class would be in all probability so intelligent, mature, and (often) unopinionated an individual he would be fairly certain to be cured in later life. Since he also stood the chance of having read five times as much as the rest of his class put together, it was hard for an honest teacher not to extend a friendly-ish paw to this maverick. Indeed, how Digger detested those F.B.I. visits concerning this student or that. Was Bunch in that bunch, after all?

He opened yet another can of beer and, before drinking this time, mixed the liquid with honey and vinegar. For, possibly as a side effect of desertion by his wife, Digger was a faddist and every now and then purchased diet books. Most of these only confused and even scared him, for a well-written health book had you every which way. Take milk, for instance. Being alkaline, milk was first-class for overacidity. On the other hand, it put on weight. Excess weight strained the heart. Thrombosis. Keep trim. Yet, on still another hand, it was fat that maintained the position of the kidneys, and loss of weight in middle age spelled a dropped kidney. In short—where were you?

Digger felt angry that this crisis had come right at the start of term, to disturb the peace of the whole Department. He felt more angry than anything that they'd done damn all at the meeting. He corrected two papers—on *Opereus Rex* and *Othello the Good Moar* respectively—then, mind turning, sought refuge in the evening paper. A movie perhaps, after all. His local listed a double feature—*Waterfront Women* and *Forbidden Women*. Another bughouse nearby offered even richer fare—a triple feature consisting of *The Mask of the Vampire*, *The Cry of the Werewolf*,

and *The Soul of a Monster*. Not even the management's banner invitation, LADIES THIS IS DISH NITE could lure Digger Davies into that one. What, not even a good Cockhitch about?

No, he realized that to see anything worthwhile he'd have to go to one of the out-of-the-way art houses, and catch something with subtitles in Sanskrit. Which he didn't feel like doing at the moment. He turned to the concoction of tuners, speakers, and preamps that comprised his hi-fi set, a collection Huysmans would dearly have envied. Oh hell, he thought, as he opened another can, if it's hideous it has to happen to the English Department.

Hoyd Rushzak had just had time to make his appointment. Refusing his friend Axel's offer of a Martini and flinging himself into the IRT some minutes after the meeting, he realized with luck he'd make it no more than fifteen minutes late. And in any case it'd do no harm at all to his prospects of success to keep this publisher waiting awhile.

For Hoyd was peddling one of his periodic textbooks in the field of freshman composition. Each year he offered these around he had to make them lighter, more palatable, less formal—in short, more glaringly permissive and illiterate. Nowadays this had the invidious advantage of getting the book into the "word-power" market. Invidious, since this automatically deprived the text of those classier adoptions Hoyd would have liked to record when under consideration for promotion.

Truth be told, these compilations—scissors-and-paste jobs in the main—were two a penny, and Hoyd made little money and almost no academic headway with them at all. However, every now and then, one edited by someone else did catch on, adoptions ran into the hundreds, and the man concerned was suddenly in big business. But since the failures which Hoyd published carried no prestige (a pat on the back in a corridor, that was all), he simply regarded them as a relatively polite method of mildly increasing his income. He smiled. His income. Four kids, plus a wife who couldn't shop. He supposed he shouldn't really have

stuck his neck out over Orrin in the meeting at all but, well, hell.

Although term had only just started Hoyd's eyes scanned the car. This was the time of year when aggrieved D's from the previous term approached their professors all over Brooklyn, Manhattan, and the Bronx, preparatory to filing "complaints" with the Registrar. Hoyd readied his usual crack: he was always willing to change a grade—downwards. All in all, a Lincoln teacher tended to keep a wary eye about him in public transit in the city.

Conspicuous in seersucker, and biting on his empty pipe, Hoyd limped forward and picked up a grubby *Mirror*, flapping on the floor. In his mind he rehearsed the meeting with a slightly more tolerant exasperation than that of Digger Davies. For Hoyd the whole Bunch action stank of contemporaneity. Nor had the logorrhea of the various speakers offended him (a fairly windy one) unduly. Hoyd liked his colleagues and, on the whole, felt comfortable in the mainly Jewish enclave they offered—rightly so, since there were colleges in which the Jewish professor was discriminated against, and to such unsung victims Lincoln gave sanctuary, of a sort. But he remained unenamored of the modern age.

He stared at the paper before him now with parodistic smile. Fulton Sheen on the launching pad. A gangster shot at on the open streets of the city ("Frank's Fedora, With Added Ventilation"); an incompetent actress had slashed her wrist on the Coast; a similar transient had shed and wed; the highway toll mounted horribly, mercuries dipped, traffic snarled, hoodlums blew, cops nabbed, Czars bled, teeners flipped, Meany was gloomy, many celebrities were reported Las Vegationing with other technically flawless and sexually reciprocal animals, while Reds were nailed here, there, and everywhere, so it seemed. Yes, indeed, the good old House Committee on Un-American Activities was off in throbbing flight once more, having just announced that any argument to the effect that the Communist movement in the United States might be dead was "part of a deliberate effort," head-

shaking Hoyd bemusedly read, "to deceive the American people." When you caught a Communist, that proved they were all over the shop; when you couldn't find any, and the philosophy was palpably dead, *ergo* there were even more of them about, only all "gone underground." Or did it merely mean that the committee concerned desired to stay in business?

Somewhere in the midst of this phantasmagoria that passed for twentieth century life, and by setting equated in importance with the other items in possibly the most devastating zeugma ever, was a report of the last explosion. A great white light, cold on the desert. And already the now regulation scientist, the age's Pagliacci, had trotted forward to show statistically that strontium 90 was really good for you. Taken in milk it made the fingers curl. In the center of this salad, Hoyd reflected, with his wry smile increasing, an excitable type like Meilberg had his heyday. Oh hell, it was all so complicated. And almost certainly not what the founding fathers had had in mind at all.

He tossed away the paper with a sigh. He thought of the meeting with an attempt at a shrug. In common with most of the more junior members he hated the manner of Orrin's dismissal. At the same time he felt no clarion call to act as champion on his behalf. Bunch had been a man very well able to take care of himself; his already announced lawyer was the best. To his own wife Marlene, Hoyd had argued that he had taken a certain job and was obliged to abide by its rules. He had quoted the *Crito*. And logic added the rider that if he didn't like it, he could always shove it. He was a free individual in a free society, wasn't he?

"*Dale la mano, Junior!*" a woman screeched. The antique had pulled up somewhere or other. Then, as the doors slammed to again, Hoyd saw the yellow Lincoln dust wrappers on some textbooks. The two were jostling for position round a pole with a derelict. Both unknown to him. Relax. He glanced surreptitiously at the pair. Having hauled himself out of this class by his bootstraps, Hoyd didn't feel the compassionate affection for these

students that someone, from a totally different environment, often did.

What a world, he thought as he watched them, what a half-century to inherit yet. A world of floral prayer caps, of baseball-playing nuns breaking the sound barrier, of instant red wine (and kosher vodka, too), of steaks that sang while being cooked, babies born with telephone numbers, weather satellites, world-wide TV and sound waves that could bug the conversation in any room in the city. Oh how the world, thought smiling Hoyd, had changed in the last five years alone. Italy in the war! Why, he was old in his thirties. Above all, he was no longer seeing culture from beneath, with desire, but from above, with condescension. *He had ceased to think.*

Ruefully he rubbed his scut. The turnover of trends was too cruelly rapid for those whose duty in society was to study the conceptual and not even he, impoverished prof, could help being a victim. Most important, Hoyd was scared, not for himself, but for his children. Public education in New York City was already far from public education in (even) New Jersey. Would they really grow up unable to make intelligent conversation for more than sixty seconds on end, the time it took for a commercial on TV? In truth, he and Marlene had been solemnly devising a number of techniques for getting their young off the gogglebox—from pulling plugs in the wall to importing fistfuls of comics. It was damnable hard in the city. His stop.

Hoyd limped out. He sighed again. The publisher toward whose offices he was now directing his ailing, Dogberry steps was one he had carefully selected for its titles like *Children Are People* or *Wake Up And Live!* or (what more could any firm in its senses hope for?) Elizabeth Goudge on St. Francis of Assisi. Hoyd stepped into the self-service elevator with a couple of delivery lads.

“Hit the tit,” said one, and a number gladly glowed.

Smiling, embarrassed, Hoyd stroked his sarcastic finger over seven and dutifully it lit up too. Strains of Mozart, or was it

Sansohn, or again Beethoven, streamed into the ascending cubicle of steel and brass. He fidgeted, disliking those seconds when you strove to appear at ease with total strangers in elevators. One of the delivery lads had a text on Cauchy's residue theorem. Lincoln, too? The elevator stopped at seven.

And as he walked out and across the soundless fudge of Williamson McNeery's floor and gave his name to the ashen-haired receptionist there, he understood why it was aspiring writers published stories about stenographers discovering dead babies in their desk drawers, and Henry Miller expressed the fictional desire to dribble to a mess of blood and guts in Bloomingdale's. He was, in actual fact, close on twenty minutes late, but the editor he had to see kept him hanging about for another ten for good measure. Afflicted by copies of *New Yorker* and *Esquire* Hoyd smoothed at his crew cut against a glass wall cabinet.

An affable fellow was the editor, very proud of André Gide, one of whose minor tales had slipped unseen into an anthology the house had put out for classroom "discussion" (a beastly little yarn no one had understood at all had likewise added Unamuno to their list—Hoyd decimated the old Rector of Salamanca University in a matter of four or five witty solecisms).

So the two haggled in a mirror, professor playing businessman against businessman playing professor. An unedifying exercise, dissatisfying to both, Hoyd sensed, realizing right away that it was no dice and that he would have to up and engage in what a student had termed the Battle of Grand Concourse to return home empty-handed again.

He was met by a harassed Marlene who informed him that their youngest had upset a chocolate drink over the single fitted carpet, installed two weeks ago, while another mite had tossed his bottle of Kne-Hy Sody Pop out the window for kicks. It had all but brained a pedestrian en route. Hoyd performed mental calculations with his pay, smiling softly the while.

"Then, dear, there was a call from Mac Hamrin. He'd just got in. Now I hope I have this right."

"And what did the Hamrin want?" Hoyd lazily inquired.

Streaky-haired, in chino shorts, his wife studied a note also wilting from Bosco. "Mac said would you be sure to call him directly you got in. It's about Katzman's resignation."

"What! Seymour's resigned," he exclaimed, his usual nothing-can-singre-me manner slipping.

"I thought you knew. Mac said the younger men are terribly anxious about his successor."

"I should think so." He went quickly to the telephone and dialed the Secretary's Brooklyn number. "Mac? You? Marlene tells me Sey's resigned. What does this mean precisely?"

"It means just that. He's resigned," came back Hamrin's obviously worried tones. "Called one or two of the senior men in after we'd left, it seems, and signified his decision then."

"But resigned from what? From the Chairmanship, from the Department, or what?"

"The former. His letter is in the hands of the President now. Listen, Hoyd," added Hamrin more cautiously, "it behooves the, ah, younger element in the Department to come together just as soon as possible."

"It certainly does."

"To look after our, er, interests, as it were. I hope to get an hour convenient for us all some time toward the end of next week. You'll come, won't you, Hoyd?"

"Bet your life I will."

After they'd rung off Hoyd stood staring at the chocolate on the carpet. Round the bud of his pipe his lips stirred. Jesus Christ. Disgusted over Bunch, huh? Well, good old Seymour. What hadn't needed saying between the two was that "younger men" euphemized "our side," for if Katzman had resigned there would be election for the Chair, and heaven help the losing faction. At a place like Lincoln, with three or four hotly warring interne-cine tribes within each Department, this could be the most important matter in a teacher's career. None of your pretty little Ivy League or Oxbridge politics here. God, no. At Lincoln what

were the squabbles of old maids elsewhere turned into straight Medici murders, open feuds with the losers relegated to years of Remedial English, viz., teaching Polish plowboys to make it as rocket engineers, or, worse, sent to the so-called salt mines, ninety-minute evening classes, for Lincoln proudly boasted it stayed open day and night.

Marlene called, "Did I get it right?"

"You sure did. A new Chairman. Hmph." He went for a drink, forgetting even to tell her what Williamson McNeery, Inc., had said. Possibly she guessed for she came and linked one bony arm in his.

"Good and dry."

Swirling the Martini he muttered through his pipe, "We don't want to rock the boat."

"That lovely rug." His wife leered at the stain. "What I need is a wand, like those clever women on TV."

"Bosco," said Hoyd. "Well, at least it's the name of a French novelist." Bravely he maintained his ironic smile as he removed and wiped his spectacles. "I wouldn't have minded so much if only the name had had internal rhyme, or something."

As Marlene went off with her drink he decided to ignore his papers and settle down to a book. After years of correcting composition Hoyd had become incapable of enjoying anything beyond those two aspects of a single coin, scholarly dissection and detective fiction. Once or twice he had tried to stay with some touted novel, but the last sample—recommended by Lorenzo—had soured him for sixteen months, a frail tale from the South that had turned out to be a fairy story in all senses of the term. He picked up now his current British mystery, of the genre he preferred: these were heavily dated, in the Edgar Wallace-Conan Doyle tradition, where it was assumed that with Watson *et al.* John Q. Citizen would recoil in awestruck amaze from the slightest sign of scientific lore. But tonight Hoyd found it impossible to concentrate. All that ran through his head was the single question—A new Chairman, but *who*?

Four

The ripples of palace revolutions from on high had so far failed to disturb the brothers of Alpha Pi. In the front room The Alliance had pocketed their cards and were in silent concentration on the femme-form passing the open window, while behind them Mark De Vayo wrestled with a paper on "Risk Analysis" and an overdue assignment on Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*.

"Ist das nicht eine sexy mouse?" Roy Talyacan, his pinkish chin rising this morning from a sort of ascot at the Adam's apple, tipped forward on the barber seat. "What you might call a nifty nymph."

"Holy cow!" The pair craned. Delicious rissole. And after a sip at his glass Jesse Paul crooned, "The frontal torsion. Let y'r hair down and your bosom out." The object of their appreciation was now mincing by beneath them. "'At's what I call a locomotion of *real* devotion, bird."

"Prob'ly colder'n witch's tit in bed." This loud enough for her to hear. In short, the semester, already well under way, was taking a pleasant turn in Alpha Pi Upsilon's frathouse. For the next few weeks Roy and Jesse knew they could cut their crap courses, getting pledges to answer for them, bring back and work out their sundry course assignments. Already The Alliance was making rings round Orrin Bunch's sweating successor, the Joycean

Sigmund Fleisch. At Lincoln every frathouse was provided with a library of past examinations, themes, answered assignments and corrected term papers. These were neatly docketed, with the date of each submission, grade received, and the name of assigning professor, to avoid embarrassing duplications. Years ago, it was said, one alumnus in the English Department returned an essay to a frat boy with the comment: "This paper got an A when I handed it in eighteen years ago; I see no reason why it shouldn't get the same grade now."

At Alpha Pi the pledges had also, over the years, compiled an elaborate graph of all teachers' grading habits in every course in each Department of the college. Finally, one fraternity even kept on file a pious little bibliography of articles that came out from time to time on "Combating the Problems of Cheating" in periodicals like *School and Society* or *The Educational Forum*. Thus the Dean of Colby Junior College (450 girls in New Hampshire) was recently on record as claiming that "In two concentrated and consecrated years" the *Colby Plan*, or honor system, made it possible "to turn out young women who will help to raise the level of any community in which they live."

Now, with their blend to hand, Jess and Roy could spend their mornings as befitting leaders of the house, rocking in their chairs and undressing, in as humiliating detail as possible, every Lincoln co-ed who came by. Parenthetically it might be added that for them cheating did not touch the realm of ethics in humane studies, for these were regarded as a totally unjustified addition to the curriculum: thus, reproducing old term papers and the like was merely a matter of paying the instructor, and the system, back.

Watching their present victim, sturdy Sue Libermann, gliding away, Roy Talyacan frowned.

"Y'know, funny thing. That woman I picked up in the Village last night."

"You give her a liberal education, Royboy?"

"She been aroun' quite a bit."

"She also happened to be quite a bit around," his friend snickered in reply. "I was sad to leave her to you, man."

Mark De Vayo glanced up. "I know d'kin'. While in Switzerland she studied the Alps. They studied her back. It wuz a draw."

They didn't laugh. Roy drank with a grade-B gulp.

"You shoulda seen Roy," Jesse built up with a whimpering grin. "What was that puss wearing yet, a gownless evenin' strap or sumpin'?"

Roy continued to nod gravely. "Somebody poured milady into that little thing and fergot to say when."

"Man oh man, someone musta painted that lily on her, like. I mean, strapless, backless, sideless. A *belt!* Was it legal, Roy?" Jesse corned, moaning with laughter. "Will you tell me that, fer chrissake? Was it legal yet?"

"Boy, was she the star." Roy still spoke ruminatively, through heavy gulps. "With hydrogen and oxygen playing the supporting roles, as you might say." Suddenly he added, "Y'wanna know something? That dame tol' me she was married to a guy onna faculty here."

"Whaat!" Jesse gogged.

Mark cried, "No kidding?"

"That what she said. Guy called Davies, inna English Department. Anyone know him aroun' here?"

"Nope."

"Not me."

"Course she was drunk."

"I'll say," agreed Jesse with fervor.

Roy shook his head. "I *never* knew what Cloud Nine wuz like till I danced with that dame. Even better'n Shilla."

"Cheez," laughed Jesse thickly, "an' if I'm squeezing this nickel tight as Roy squeeze Shilla, boy, the Indian'd be riding the buffalo a'ready. Don't say you din't make her, man."

With a paternal smile Roy gave a palpitating account of how he had driven the Davies dame to a dive off the sixties, and left her there. En route, however, he had been active. Owing to con-

fined quarters in their own and their dates' apartments, both students were expertly advised of the sexual potential of the U.S. automobile's interior. Approximately a third of the frat would indeed end up wearing steering wheels for haloes. And it was noticeable that what Roy emphasized most acutely here was the painful and degrading detail of the experience for this floundering faculty wife, who sounded as if she had as many morals as a manta ray. But the true joy of a Lincoln frat man was really to rape an unwilling virgin, and get away with it; active post-mortems on the rupture of the hymen were highly popular here, as possibly elsewhere.

“Yay, yay.” Jesse’s lips had dropped open and his head was rolling on the back of his chair when Mark De Vayo bawled in irritation—“Say you guys, howja like *this*?” He read in a smothered manner; it was a mode (at once comprehensible to Jesse and Roy) that defeated many an instructor and which now made Marlowe’s mighty line emerge like a Diesel horn stoppered with toffee:

“‘Brighter art thou than flaming Jupiter
When he appeared to hapless Semele. . . .’”

“Hapless?” Roy inquired with interest.

“Says here,” Mark went on slowly, still gobbing his words, “Semele: daughter of Cadmus, killed when embraced by d’God Jupiter in the form of forked lightning. Now howja *like* that, fer Pete’s sake?”

“Oh boy,” Jesse remarked after a moment, “whatta way to go.”

Roy refilled his glass. This kind of thing was more to his liking. While continuing to anatomize in detail the female flesh now changing classes outside, he discussed with Jess such subjects as whether having a woman who was running a fever was “moster” than the same feat accomplished when squeezing her throat, or otherwise artificially constricting her orifices. Needless to say, the

livery worn by these new heroes of the gynecaeum was largely vicarious. All the same, this kind of city voluptuary of the sixties was simply an extreme representative of technological cultures, of the “doom of youth” and the romance of action. It was not for nothing that de Sade was the author circulated in such fraternities, and in particular that author’s *Les 120 Journées de Sodome*, where the crescendo of dashing scenes involving coprophilic abasements for the sweeter sex was largely uninterrupted by “junk” (philosophizings) and which, for the benefit of Alpha Pi, had been set into a sort of screwball English by an enormously bored French pledge of some years back.

Meanwhile, the vocabulary of these oglers in no way suggested the scrupulosity of their desire, which verged at times on the absorbingly exquisite. Living in a huge Quaker city like New York where, as seldom before in Western civilization, repressed sex screamed from every side, the appeal needed to touch off the spasmic reaction in the consciousness of such roués as these had to be melodramatic indeed. Why, some of them had already cased South American ports in the Merchant Marine. As a result, the European novels of adolescence they were sometimes assigned in crap courses, containing scenes where fumbling English eighteen-year-olds scarcely spied on girls undressing, meant absolutely nothing at all to their jaded tastes. *Tropic of Cancer*, after all, was required in Soc B 7.1 (“Methodology of the American Hero”), while *Ulysses* was a set text in dozens of courses and, save for the episode involving the Honourable Mrs. Mervyn Talboys, moved these frat boys not an ell.

The pair passed on to debate what sexual high jumps they would require of their pledges this term, what oddments of intimate apparel the initiates would be compelled to collect and in what exposed locales (from telephone booths to ice-cream parlors) they would have to prove they’d committed, at best incest, at least intercourse-by-outrage. At this point an especially vibrative female female drew their attention within the scurrying throngs.

"For Pete's sake!" Jesse exclaimed on a note of disgust. "If that isn't one lasagna-lass who treats herself well."

His comrade stared. "What I'd call a well-cleaved hamus alabamus. From the point of view of stability, that is."

"Just lookit the way that banana splits." He was gazing open-mouthed at the serenely slung pelvis now passing by and De Vayo again glanced up. He joined The Alliance at the window.

"She's hip," goaded Roy with his "poised" grin. "In more ways than one."

"How *'bout* that, Markie? The Seven Mile drive ain't no more curves."

"It's what's up front that counts," agreed his friend.

For a moment more De Vayo watched the girl with a sulky stare on his vacant face. Dimly he heard Jesse moan, "Y'know her, Markie? What're they like? Big melons, boy? Huge-big? Hub-cap nipples, hey?"

They had sensed it. Mark knew this huckleberry from the far Far Rockaways who was swivel-cheeking by, in her Capri tights. She had refused him access the previous term and was, accordingly, "a genuine slut."

"Nah." He shook his curly mop. "She all hairy."

"What you expeck, man? Feathers?" Jesse danced, working himself up, his underlip shivering.

But Mark was still shaking his head. "She not over twenty-one."

"Built better." However, mentally Roy docketed the legal detail.

"Betcha Fitz is pushing forty this semester."

"Jeepers." De Vayo's glistening orbs had been bemusedly following another figure. "There's a kid across there. . . ." He hesitated. It wasn't that she was pretty. "I dunno. She sends me. Main line."

"Now don't pop your cork," Roy protested coolly, "over Sylvia Hantmann yet. That squirrel works for *Eagle*."

"Yeh?" Mark's voice was unconvinced.

"A grub."

"Well, that stud's got a connection from waist to legs is really something," he returned stubbornly. The Alliance surveyed him. Had something happened to the college Casanova? That girl out there *wore glasses*. Small bust, big nose. "Tellya I saw her on Orchard las' summer." Mark was aggrievedly stroking a sideburn. "That kid's got a living end, y'can take it from me."

"Yay, how 'bout that?" Jesse broke in wildly. "How 'bout we form a Can Club this term?"

Roy rankly grinned. In the silence he muttered, "A Society for the Preservation an' Care of Callipygians, like."

"Hit it, man. A more meat-in-the-seat brigade."

"Inna frat?" De Vayo asked it dully. Then in a tone of anger with himself more than anything he wrenched his gaze from the receding sit-upon. "Hold onto my things, willya, fellows."

"Takin' to the hills? Don' break y'r self-winding watch over her, Markie," Jesse giggled as De Vayo scattered his texts and shrugged into his leather jacket.

"Yeh, look her over well," Roy added with his open grin, "there's more to a stove than the burner, boy."

De Vayo avoided their eyes, prancing nimbly out the house and down the sidewalk in the wake of his Beatrice.

"The way Mark pours the cream on 'em." Jesse grimaced. "Whatsa betting he makes her by tonight?"

"Backscuttles her, y'mean?"

"Screws the bejesus out of the little bitch by sundown." Suddenly the boy swore and turned to fix himself another drink. "Army-style, I mean."

Roy remained ruminative. "Y'know, that wasn't such a rotten idea of yours jus' now, Jess." He delivered a patronizing, though pertinent, pat to the Jayne Mansfield pinup. "What say we run a Miss Superior Posterior contest at the college, huh?"

Holding his replenished glass, Jesse was now trembling like a cornered mouse. Delighted to have his idea accepted by his buddy, he collapsed into a chair and, knotting his legs beneath it, all but fell forward on his face. "How 'bout that, say!" He

flung a napkin dispenser across the room and slashed, laughing, at his head. "A Back of the Lap Comp. An Ass Gas yet."

"We could len' a hand with the photography, like."

"Mainly the darkroom work." Jesse was in ecstasies. They'd run it from the frat. Real king-size queens. Maybe even Fitz herself. Strobe f/11. He'd shoot in spurts. "Man oh man, you can put up the Standing Room Only sign right now."

"Guaranteed to grow hair along Bald-Headed Row as well. We'll plant the contest inna *Eagle*, see."

"Right. That rag needs revising. All this crap they running 'bout a whiskers in the English Department being fired."

Roy gazed sternly ahead. "A guy can have as many degrees as a thermometer and still be a red, can't he?"

Jesse snapped his fingers hard. "Who cares? Goop called Bunch gets the bum's rush. Serve him right for failing those guys in the frat las' term, I say. Why should we be expected to mind? Who's Jesus Christ 'roun' here, I'd like to know."

He began giggling again and Roy suggested—"Maybe Sigma Pi might have some ideas on the subject, Jess. What say we stroll?" He started for the door and, with a final swallow, Jesse stumblingly followed. They had friends in the other frat they hadn't seen this term. On the way out, however, Roy cried, "Hold it!"

Two students were waxing a passage floor.

"What's your name?" rapped Roy.

"Eddie Drosa—Irv Goldstein," the two chimed back at once.

"What's the cardinal sin of a pledge?"

The cardinal sin of a pledge, Eddie Drosa was about to begin when a voice beside him chanted it first—"Arrogance is the cardinal sin of a pledge."

"Well, you've just sinned," Roy announced to Goldstein, whose sallow face gave a wince of anticipation. "Grab pooch, pledge. Assume the position."

While the boy knelt and held his genitals, and Roy went for the fraternity paddle, Jesse wandered out. As he heard the first

smack he tittered to himself—"If Roy administers to the seat of learning like he gen'lly does, I have an idea that kid's going to get a whole semester in one lesson." He kicked at a scooter painted MELODY. "*Too low!*" came a cry. After a minute Roy came out rather red in the face.

Sigma Pi Alpha was an almost exact replica of the Alpha Pi abode. A kitty-cat in the trashcan on the stoop and inside the same grossly factual situation in full progress. There was even an overweight student chugging purposelessly up and down the stairs. In a form of social compensation Lincoln fraternities prided themselves on their severity to pledges. Two brothers were running a diaper service in back.

Here, however, the main room had been papered with WANTED notices of women criminals and a captured telephone booth, capsized, had been converted into a bar. In this atmosphere of ninetyish decadence, if not dandyism, were the very few who could find a moment free in the college curriculum and who emphasized that liberty by an opposite extreme—two brothers drinking beer, one staring at TV, another playing chess with a rival from the Zeta house.

"Come in, come in," Jess and Roy were greeted with. "This is a gang bang. Abandon hope all ye who enter here."

The Prior, a tall bald senior with a pleasant, featureless face, rose from in front the set and warmly welcomed The Alliance.

"How's life? You go plus or minus las' term, Roy?"

"How's the Army doin' without you, Jess?"

While the Sigma brothers plied The Alliance with Tuborg, they discussed grades, teachers, girls, at the same time as desultorily observing the screen: this last was "something different"—a man, informed by his doctors he was certain to die of a heart attack in the next seventy-two hours, had volunteered to spend his remaining moments before the cameras in return for a huge inheritance for his wife and kids. The entire nation was said to be glued to this particular program, waiting for one gray-haired individual, at the moment chatting with a doctor (white coat

carefully labeled) to suffer a stroke. In fact, a New York tabloid had started a sweepstake on the moment of death. The network claimed the affair in the interests of education.

At the chess table the Zeta brother had gone, "1, P - K4."

"Reply 2,M - Q B 3," Roy quietly advised the Sigma man. After a second the fellow obeyed.

"P and P," Roy equally softly instructed the other.

"Oh for Chris' sake. Get outa here, willya, Roy!"

Grinning with aplomb, Roy sat down on a cushioned coffin to explain their derriere drive. It was an understanding audience. "We need your help, to put pressure on *The Eagle*, like."

"Sure. It's a swell idea." They all laughed.

"Only hope Dean Grudin'll think so, too."

"Hell, yes, they had a Miss Take contest a few years back, 'member, and practically everything got on display one way or another. The Dean didn't give a damn."

"Personally I back that Fitz to carry off the can. She oughta put out more bunsen burners 'round here."

"Sue Libermann's south-south-west is pleasantly, er, upholstered."

"Whatta girl! I hear she leaps into the bed, all eager for the fray."

A few heads nodded at this intimation of intimacy, almost certainly noncanonical.

"I also hear Sue's dancing at Raymond's this term. Unner another name."

They filled up with beer as they chatted. The Prior's eye passed over a shiny black box, dramatically padlocked. He smiled to himself. Advance information. Potentially useful in the event of wagers.

Briefly, this box contained the results of a theft from the Sports Building required of an initiate several years ago. City regulations made it mandatory for every entrant to Lincoln to pose for a series of posture photos when undergoing the first medical (mainly, the girls were turned every which way but loose);

these bending, squatting, stretching shots were duly filed with a general history, a dossier allegedly compiled "in the student's interest" but, more realistically, used by the college to avoid being sued. The Sigma pledge had simply stolen the entire set of posture photos for the class of '65—women. They were kept firmly under lock and key at the house, however, and not even the most senior brothers were allowed to take them out, lest "dupes" be made and some Westchester matron (pillar of B'nai B'rith) find herself, in a few years' time, immortalized to the tune of ten dollars a set on the Times Square strip.

Jesse was fumbling uninterestedly in an old stove, hijacked from some Mexican motel and utilized as a book rack. It now housed the usual mixture of copies of *Scientific American*, a *Newsweek* index several years old, a recent *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, the fragmented remains of an encyclopedia which, thanks to HOW TO HUG on its cover, a brother had once paid solid cash for from a second-hand stall on Sixth Avenue, and similar incunabula.

"Hey! The new *Thrush!*"

Grabbing the already thumbed journal dated, like most of its kind, some five months in advance, Jesse Paul began flipping the pages restlessly:

In typical U.S. cheesecake attitude (left) Titillating Teuton Laya Raki makes most fetchin' Gretchen to emanate from the land of sauerbraten since Dietrich. Her provocative posterior view (below) exhibits genuine 360-degree good looks. Laya has made number of TV films.

He grinned at himself—"We're in."

EXT. Campus-CS-Students hurry-De Vayo, loping in leather, follows the bespectacled, ponytail-flirting journalist, thinking: skin-tight skirt, the dumb bitch, the whole puff-smoking ensemble spells poetry and Schwabs, maybe address her in Yiddish maybe? Catches Sylvia, she reacts—

DE VAYO

Say, I know you.

HANTMANN

I don't know you.

DE VAYO

You look familiar.

HANTMANN

What you're looking at may be. Sorry. I don't seem to recognize you.

DE VAYO

What's your name?

HANTMANN

Sylvia.

DE VAYO

Was you ever at a resort in New York?

HANTMANN

I've never been to one.

DE VAYO

Din' you go to Roosevelt High?

HANTMANN

I don't happen to live near there. Look, get off my back, will you. I have to hand in some copy to *The Eagle*.

DE VAYO

Brainsville, huh. Doin' anything tonight? Like to put on the ol' feed-bag wit' me tonight, I mean?

HANTMANN

Please. Get lost.

DE VAYO

Oh, I assure you my interest is purely . . .

HANTMANN

Natch.

DE VAYO

Tomorrow night?

HANTMANN

Look, cube up with someone else, would you. I'm late.

D E V A Y O

See you 'roun'.

H A N T M A N N

I doubt it.

CS-simulated expression of biological savagery—another slut?
De Vayo's curse—

LAP DISSOLVE TO:

INT. Classroom in Jackson-MS-English 1 in partly progress-Sigmund Fleisch (artless disorder) waves center copy of the *Wake-Drosa* bores at back-Carol Lester cleans misted specs-Richie Weiss is fixed on Fitz—

“So, vy the bage of three hundred or so,” reverently that professor raised the smudged sockets of his eyes, “Shaun, you see, is already having several violen’ love affairs.”

He smiled indulgently. Sigmund was perspiring harder than ever today. Bunch’s class had been an extra assignment, taken for the royal dollar fifty or so it yielded every aching hour. The reins couldn’t be relinquished at this stage. As Haverfield had once put it, nothing was ever so permanent as the provisional.

Down in the class Richie Weiss sighed and shifted his feet. What the hell had all this dope on a guy called Joyce to do with English 1? He yawned. Gerunds or Joyce, what did it matter, it was still a crap course. Jerry Blass slept sweetly at the back.

“This Shaun is very sexually potent . . .”

Someone urped. One feminine pencil industriously dutiful, phallically busy. Richie stirred again.

“When he ravished . . .”

That *word!* He would have to go into consultation with one of his “Men of the World” friends. Mark De Vayo, maybe, the Arthur Murray of the “I was a teenage werewolf set” who could make a cha-cha look like a revival meeting of the Mau-Mau. It was said that no girl felt the same after dancing with Markie.

"His success with the fair sex . . ."

Jesus God, when would this guy ever finish? It was torture. Dammit, she was all but within *touching* distance yet. No, out of the question again. He wasn't the "dancing" type.

At that moment the bell interrupted the Fleischian phraseology, and no more was heard. There was a stampede for the door. The next period's assignment was merely mouthed at the melee. The Sullivan Amazon dropped her pencil in her bag and picked up her things. Richie groaned with desire as she bent. Today she'd come to school all jeansy-jersey. And Christ, thought Richie, in the slimmest jims ever seen and that darned "Western" shirt she looked like nothing so much as—as a bowl of mangoes.

Behind him Jerry Blass had woken up and was stretching his "cuts" conspicuously. He followed Richie's interest.

"Whassa matter for you, Rich? Ya live inna hole? Aw, go up and speak to her, man."

For a second Richie tried to square his somewhat well-fleshed jaw, then he shook his head as Fitz sashayed self-consciously out. She had good reason to be conscious of herself. There was plenty of it. Blass whistled in her switching wake.

Richie, however, let her go. He had indeed tried talking to Fitz once or twice and each time something had gone wrong. Their few exchanges in class had been about as exciting as the obits in the *Times*. Conversations "sans amour," to be frank. No, something was lacking. Richie had an instinctive sense of what that was—mainly the much-needed "greenbacks." Lincoln and Jackson, too.

It was late in the afternoon and, since he had an hour free before his final lab, he mooned off in the direction of Weintrob Student Center, his eyebrows tufted in an even more startled manner than usual. He had a vague idea of doing some studying. But he was sure he simply had to make money if he was ever really going to get anywhere with Fitz. She was definitely "that kind of girl."

Inside Winey the click of ivories came from the poolroom and

he mooched unhappily in, sinking into a seat and automatically opening his Physics text.

A table was free. Across the room from him a pimply youth, obviously frosh, came in and started wrestling with some problem. Richie recognized a fellow sufferer in English 1, though he didn't know the kid's name. Still, he recognized the text all right—Millman's *Vacuum-Tube and Semiconductor Electronics*—and he recognized the type too, bookworm, new kid, a nervous seven o'clocker. You could always identify a seven o'clocker by this time of day at Lincoln, unshaven and with that green look. Usually had half a peach pie drying beside him, plus a weak orange drink. Slowly, stretching his shortish arms, Richie got up and snagged the table. His plan was made.

For a while he played himself, purposely shooting bad. Every now and then, with a loud "Sorry," he brushed past the pimpled kid who looked up in a jerky movement. Then Richie shot worse, cursed as he missed, strolled about boobing his plays and trying to look fatter than he was.

"Wanna shoot a game?" he threw over, when the kid next looked up.

"I dunno. Guess I oughta hit the books right now." A fairly lanky lad with small feet, he stretched and smiled sheepishly. Richie was surprised to observe that the guy seemed to have been *tearing pages* out of the elec eng text of all things. Richie's brows climbed higher than ever. Probably a first-month reaction. You never knew how they'd take the load. Deliberately flubbing a "sitter" he swore sternly at himself. He could feel the kid fairly eyeing him now as he fired.

"Jesus, but I'm shooting bad today. C'mon."

"Orright." The kid scanned his watch. "Guess I got time. A quick game of straight, O.K.?"

"O.K." Richie shot just as bad as he could without making it obvious, and let the kid take him easily. The poor bastard's fingers, yellow with nicotine stains, were shaking like antennae in Hurricane Hilda.

"How 'bout some moneyballs?" Digging into a sagging pocket, Richie asked it most innocently.

"Orright," said the kid. "How much a way?"

"Quarter do?"

"Kay."

They flipped for the break and Richie won. "Shoot pool," he said solemnly. Too good to be true, he thought as he chalked. The "mazuma" is mine already. I'll ask her for a night "on the town" next week. He saw it all clearly—a neighborhood movie, then a spot of sofa duty after—as he broke up the pack and scored the eleven. But the ace ball was blocked by fifteen. A woodsy smack—*cluck!* He shot without dropping a one.

Very gingerly the kid chalked up, his fingers making like Van Cliburn's on opening night, and hesitantly he approached the table. Jeepers, what a rabbit, thought Richie to himself, it's in the bag already. To hide his triumph he turned his owl-like eyes for a second out the window on a necking couple beyond. When he turned back, however, he double-took. The kid had started shooting.

Weeping Moishe! The balls had begun to move to the pockets as if magnetized already—ace, deuce, three, four, five, six, seven, and—Sweet Suffering Saint Ornithicon!—*eight* balls! Richie swallowed tensely. It had to be an accident. Then *Thuck!*—he socked it, the kid just missed on an impossible nine. Richie rechalked till the tip of his cue resembled a quarry.

He just made the nine on a side-pocket but failed his position and flubbed the ten. The kid was blowing gently on his right hand, then he leaned over, still trembling like mad, and fired. He scored up to fifteen.

What luck, thought Richie bitterly. It would have to happen to me. An Indian in the first rack.

"Three and a half bucks, I tink," drawled the kid, blowing into both hands.

"Here." Richie handed over. I'll get even the next rack, he thought angrily.

It was the kid's turn to break. The balls flew. Seven and thirteen skidded into pockets. *Oi weh!* This time the guy wasn't missing at all. Slowly Richie rubbed the back of his hand over his balding pate. The roundhouse had cost him some seven dollars.

"Many, many thanks," he said, trying not to sound too sarcastic as he spoke. "What you say your name was, by the way?"

"I din't. But it's Stan. Stanley Schochet."

"Thanks. I'll remember that." Richie walked out in the direction of his lab. "Thanks again," he uttered venomously, to no one in particular, as he went.

Far from being able to date Fitz in the near future, he now knew that for the next week at least he would be compelled to give up milk and food in favor of coffee and cigarettes. Suddenly, as he walked, it hit him. The only solution. The Giveaway Show. The Great Ride. It was the only thing for it. Get on one of the quiz shows and lick up the gravy. Man, oh man. Hope lit in Richie like a "gull-wing" headlamp. His stride picked up. The \$35,000,000 answer. Frantically he began wondering how many yards of dental floss were manufactured in the United States a year, who invented the three-button suit, how the second-hand shoelace industry in Latvia was faring, and whose engagement was broken off in Skank, West Virginia, in 1902.

Axel Maine examined his watch as he strode down the corridor to his cubicle. Two hours of those psychiatric sessions euphemized as English conferences awaited him. There would be time to return his overdue books, sink one martini, or maybe two, and just make the meeting that evening. Pity it had to be at Digger's place; yet secrecy, he knew, was essential in such matters.

Outside his office there was the usual cluster of students waiting to discuss their papers, i.e., their grades. God, one forgot there were so many people in the world till one taught at Lincoln. Axel expanded his smile, passing with a nod ("Yes, Mr. Goldstein") a youth in a leather jacket stencilled WRESTLING IRV and

getting out his load of keys. As he fumbled at the lock—three typewriters, two telephones, and a complete set of Britannica had been spirited from these cubicles only last term—he was conscious that not one of the students waiting to see him was posed normally. It was a little bit like a Renaissance composition, with a sense of subdued pandemonium in the air. While Wrestling Irv, for instance, lolled with exaggerated relaxation against the wall, a birdlike girl, rigid in black, held forth on the Fourier integral. Miss Salibelle Jakolsa, he remembered, finally unlocking the door, pleased at recognition of that “eccentric” mask, with its flat pallor and mouth like a purple butterfly. Miss Zurkowskas, meanwhile, a soft-skinned Bio soph with edible cheeks and a mare’s mane, had seated herself on the table behind, next a tense boy who straddled his chair in a Norbert-Wiener forgotten prodigy pose.

Axel cleared the remnants of that noon’s egg salad off his desk and started taking them one by one. A senior who worked as packer by night and lived in the routine isolation from his orthodox parents. *What right?* he suddenly felt, seeing his red-pencil exclamation marks by the words “an anecdote to the poison.” This boy had been *born* in a concentration camp. He turned the minus sign into a surreptitious plus. The next was Irv Goldstein who for some reason preferred to take his interview standing up. The next, a whey-faced lout with dripping locks, author of *My High School: A Great Experience*, jabbed a menacing thumb at Axel’s corrective comments—“What does *dis* say?” Patiently Axel explained. Lincoln students considered any handwriting with character bad. The boy went out to a surly stamp.

He was, however, one of the few to show resentment. By this time of day most of them were too exhausted to care about anything except getting home. Then the Fourier integral girl. Despite her Cuban heels she was immensely timid and blushed hectically as Axel trod delicately over her Bronx baroque, spiral-bound in baby blue, the title painted in gold and “singed” *Salibelle (Sally) Jakolsa, U.Fr.5.* From her over-autobiographical papers Axel al-

ready knew that in her spare seconds she taught dance—chiefly samba, baiao and tanghinho rhythms—and supported her mother in Brooklyn off summer jobs in resort hotels. Axel respected Salibelle Jakolsa, but he advised her to write less poignantly.

Then a bony youth, all nerves, wearing an unbuttoned button-down shirt, tartan cap, and a truly memorable pair of shoes. This gifted polyglot's apotheosis of the beat poet Mank Held revealed a total inability to write a word of English, backed by a dim high school desire to aspire to the apogee of a Mayoral speech. Axel's final conferee: a lad whose dungarees were supported by a Wehrmacht belt with *THE SUN ALSO RISES* across it in lurid iron, and who extinguished his butt on Axel's leather case. He had discussed "A Solitary Reaper" along the lines of a sports column—"Bill lamps her alone in the field . . . William now closes in with his message." When he had gone, Axel ran a hand through his crop. Paradoxically he would have preferred to have had some more rebellion from the ranks. He tilted back his chair. Yes, he respected these kids. One forgot how hard life could be, after the Age of Ike. But, then, the whole task was so supremely cataclysmic. How could you be expected to teach style to someone who lacked the first rudiment of linguistic control? Or appreciation to those for whom History was the history of science, and the only inventions mechanical devices. In sum, *they believed in the vibrations of the ether.*

Moreover, the city teacher was up against an unusually dense thicket of curricula absurdities. CCMCE had to approve any new courses. But while that group waved glad hands at anything labeled science, English construction remained a luxury. Axel should, for instance, have counselled the last palely loitering youth to take a nonrequired course in English Basics; but to take such would be to risk a lousy grade and so jeopardize the all-essential final transcript. Thus the course he most needed would be the last he would take. And Axel was given to hesitating over his F's; the student suicide rate here was exceeded only in Japan.

Of course, there were the brilliant oddballs. There was an ex-

Portuguese in his Intro to Lit 1, who had converted to Judaism in Brazil (of all places). What's more, nearly every section of courses like these would include, at Lincoln, several who had read Tolstoy in the original, two or three who taught you Sophoclean Greek, while the German immigrants pierced a mere American's shallow understanding of Goethe over and again. Axel had several Italians who had been bored backwards by their national poet in their equivalents of high schools, while rash was the teacher who touched on "mistranslations" from Bible Hebrew.

Remembering his class, Axel's inner eye reconjured the outlines of Sylvia Hantmann phrasing comments at the wall. He was attracted by her. That combination of the slightly overheavy body, from the waist down like a bottle of Chartreuse, and in the bespectacled face that faintest air of *sainte nitouche*. Green eyeshadow and pale rose lipstick, notwithstanding. A profile to impress upon a coin. All the way down. He thought of frail Beth waiting at home, the perpetual accusation of that Army father, and his mind slumped. So *Armenian!*

"Any chaark, Ax?"

He had been about to rise when the Bostonian skull stuck itself round the door. He fumbled hurriedly.

"Tharnks." But the bland fizzog didn't blow. There was even a cachinnation of sorts. Axel tensed. Something was up. Did Enoch Appius intend peddling one of his textbooks again? "Ah-boot the meeting coming up Saturday, Ax, now that you're vutting with us, I mean . . ."

"What's that, Enoch?"

"Vutting. Very glard, very glard indidd, to have you as a vutting member, I'm sure."

Axel twiggled. He waited for it, head cocked. And after much preamble his suspicions were proved correct—"I wouldn't warnt to influence your *vutt* a bit, but ahn way an ahn-other I've bin in the Depahrtment a good many years, you might say I've got my *ruts*. . . ." The voice trailed on, then off, then the man added quickly, "We've got to elect a Chairman sun. Very sun. R. J. C.

is an internationally famous figure. Simply bahr that in mind, Ax. Has ruts. Must be orf."

As Enoch exited Axel took a breath. Now they knew the anti-Katzman candidate. And his skin crept. Jesus Christ, they had chosen Phipps. The Cadillac Professor in person. If there was one individual in the Department who could be counted on to kibosh thoroughly any hopes of peace for Axel Maine, it was internationally famous R. J. C. Why, the bastard had done everything in his power to try to prevent him getting tenure at all; it had been only Katzman's constant efforts that had got Axel even that small consolation. Yes, he felt the sweat on his forehead already. To say he mistrusted R. J. C. would have slightly been the understatement of the year.

Internationally famous for what? he would have liked angrily to ask Enoch as he'd left. After graduating from Grinnell, R. J. C. had spent a year at Trinity (Oxford) on a Rhodes Scholarship and never forgotten it. He bought his boots from Peal, his linen from Cole, his suits in Sackville Street, his hats at Lock, Dobb, Lobb, or Fogg, while his ties were invariably those of various Oxford clubs, mostly defunct, and he left *two* bottom waistcoat buttons loose.

Phipps's current claim to fame, and fortune, had started with a dim little radio program no one had been able to hear thanks to local static. However, he had succeeded in avoiding everyone's toes and soon begun to appear as a sycophant of the review media, particularly the Sunday supplements where he became deft at saying nothing—"well-turned" was the adjective applied by his admirers to one of R. J. C.'s reviews that said absolutely nothing. Gradually, bemused by the recurrence of his name, a book club of modest proportions had solicited his services for its "panel of discriminating judges." Another, larger one had followed suit, most of its jury's selections discriminating between midwives in the Middle West and adjacent Mother Geese. *Life* had soon marked out for praise R. J. C.'s grave denunciations of pessimistic, hermaphrodite, or "nay-saying" novels, and finally had

come the glory of TV itself, where now he reigned supreme, not to say in color, professional philistine and Anglophile expositor of (mainly) other people's ideas, his handsome face and white mustaches known in every second home across the land. Internationally famous, my fig! No, no, thought Axel with something akin to panic as he packed his overdue books, locked his office door, and again oh no. They had to oppose this phony to the limit. The younger men would have to contact the fairy faction at once.

Needless to say, he knew as he strolled out of Calhoun, objections such he voiced to himself about Phipps were put down by the creature's creatures as envy. Years and years ago R. J. C. had penned a soufflé of extraordinary insight on the Elizabethan lyric, though no one would have thought as much to look at him now, with his pad on Park Avenue and all the cabbage imaginable pouring in from his very sundry sources. The Cadillac Professor was what the sourer students dubbed him, for he parked one of the new Parthenon Twenty's next to the President's space daily, and the more cynical still irreverently completed his initials to Rather Jolly Clever. Directing his feet towards Winey, Axel knew Dryden would have had sport with R. J. C. The trouble was—who were they going to put up against him?

The quickest way to get to the library was through the Templeton Lounge of the Student Center. As he entered Axel found his eye jerked to the invitation nailed above the doors: **THESE LOUNGES ARE AVAILABLE FOR YOUR RECREATION. FAILURE TO COOPERATE WILL LEAD TO DISCIPLINARY ACTION.** Passing through he paused at the periodical rack. Students were milling or moiling or studying or sleeping. The words *new* and *fallout* and *peril* joined themselves in his consciousness from a smallish headline. He sat down to read the story, one more sickening than usual. Looking up he saw that the student next to him was holding his text with steel claws instead of hands. He rose and went through into the smaller annex where was the door out to the library. To his surprise the room was occupied by but two, a spotty student with a wisp of

tow across his forehead and a set-mouthed girl wearing plastered glasses. There was a pile of *Look* and *Life* magazines beside the boy's chair and the girl was carrying more. The boy was rending them purposefully.

Axel hesitated. Object? Surely he should.

"Tearing up old issues, eh?" he ventured.

The boy nodded. "Old ones, new ones. 'Eyr' all the same. She fetches them." He nodded at the girl.

"A private student-disposal unit, as it were. You don't think someone else might care to read them maybe?"

"*They don't make sense.*" The boy looked up suddenly (how scruffy he was). "*Life* and *Look* today. Tomorrow we take the women's glossies."

"How do you mean, take them?" Axel was interested.

"Tear 'em up. Like this." He demonstrated, the girl handing him a new publication from the Ballet Luce.

"Meaningless," she hissed at Axel. "Don't you see?"

He stared at her. He could have sworn it. Behind the lens of one eyeglass the lashes had been plucked out!

He said: "Is this willful destruction of public property in the nature of a political protest, may I inquire?"

"Nah. It just don't make sense."

The girl edged up with her pile for the pyre. "This isn't a political trick. Stanley simply dislikes the emissaries of nonsense." She chuckled, dumped.

"What's your name?" Axel asked, hoping to deter the depredation.

But the youth replied without interest, "Stanley Schochet. And she's Carol Lester. Take our ID numbers, why don't you?" He squeezed his eyes tight shut and tore. Miss Lester looked ecstatic. Axel continued to the library. Well, there was hope.

The library was a dismally clinical building, designed by an Italian member of the Architecture (Arc) Department and patterned on Mussolini's early post offices. The staff was a perfect hencoop of unremitting gossip. Each time the glass doors of the

Circulation Division thudded to eject another faculty member, every most junior assistant could tell you all about him: about, for instance, the private life of the Eco expert on subordinated debentures; about how the wife of Dean of Students Grudin had shot herself in San Francisco with a seventeenth century fowling piece (extremely hard to prime); about how five members of the Physics Department had recently been grilled by Congressional committees, each individually warned in advance by a student working part time for the FBI; about how the Director of the Heat Mass Flow Reaction Analyzer Lab had had Siamese twins, successfully separated; about which Speech Professor liked to work as a longshoreman summers. About—and Axel checked his step—how Axel Maine had long ago developed a penchant for (preferably) Armenian immigrants under eighteen, *elfettes* as the ladies of the staff smilingly termed the weakness, during their “take five” breaks for tea. Axel avoided their eyes.

He handed in his books, to the tune of a special faculty fine—special in the sense of being punitively larger than those for students, and waited in line for the guard at the doors to inspect his bag. In front of him fumed an ex-French Count, a full Professor in the Department of Romance Languages, as the local Berlitz School was called. But he, too, had to bare his all before the gum-chewing guard, the courtesy being made as humiliating and protracted as possible in inverse ratio of seniority. Emeriti were treated worst. And as Axel half-ran out, deciding to telephone the R. J. C. dope in to Hamrin at once, he knew that the staff behind the desk were aware to a last “impulse” twitch which faction he supported in his Department, and instinctively sensed already that the younger men were in desperation as to who to put up as candidate for the four-year period, mandatory under the bylaws. “Secret conclave” would be upon them soon.

“I gave Renfro rather a lashing in the last *Hudson*, I’m afraid,” said the mild-faced man. “Hippolytus as the prototype of the

banker, indeed." Hoyd Rushzak maintained his smile of exhausted sarcasm; tonight, however, he suffered in earnest, and the back of his throat felt like emery paper.

Beside him gangling Mac Hamrin nodded approvingly, over an elegant vest, over his dead shag pipe. The pair were on their way to Digger's, apprised of the awful news. "A neat job, Hoyd," he said, the motion of the car making the amber horn-rims, dangling from a string about his neck, jounce slightly on bony clavicles. "But did you see Witteck's piece on Kehle in *PMLA*? Practically proved the man a forger, didn't it?"

"I'll say," Hoyd lackadaisically rejoined. "Nothing left of the man by the end of it. I wonder Kehle'll get up on his feet again in public after that."

"Took the skin right off his back. You know, I heard a rumor that Witteck mailed out an offprint to every member of the faculty at Northwestern."

Hoyd shook his head. What malice. Yet in effect it was an action they understood, interpreting as it did what he and his kind felt about so many colleagues. A stop in the local jerked the pair together. As the train got under way again Mac Hamrin swung his eyes upward:

When *He's* Ready for College
Will College Be Ready for *Him*?
DOUBLE ENROLLMENTS IN TEN YEARS!

The Secretary stared at the pietism with viced pipe. Though they were on their way to the emergency meeting, neither spoke of issues at stake. One never knew who might overhear. Instead they turned to shop.

"How're yours this term?"

"Classes bigger than ever," Hoyd enunciated with effort. "I got Roget's *The Saurus* in a theme this morning."

Chuckling, Hamrin replied, "Actually I had a damn good Freudian sports story in yesterday. Should have been titled

Sheets and Kelley. But in a pop quiz on the Bible I see one outer-space genius discussed 'The Sermon on the Mound.'"

"The pitcher's mound, I'll bet."

"Imagine so. Trouble is, it takes time to learn to write even the English language from scratch. You can't hope to teach it in three months. I wonder we attempt it at all."

"The lure of that stupendous pay packet at the end of each month, I guess."

"The pay's not much but we can always get a seat in the subway, huh."

They were silent a moment. Then Hoyd croakingly got out, "You know, Mac, I read a survey of Bronx family life. In a footnote, I mean. May have been *CJF* or *QJS*." For these could confidently communicate via initials. "Anyhow, it said there the average family in that part of the city was now only having 1.4 children. What I wondered was why the .4 always ended up in my classes."

They got out and strolled toward their colleague's apartment, where was to be the close recess. These Riverdale streets were quiet in the technicolor night. Digger's apartment was advisably removed from prying eyes.

"Since Prospero called Ariel a chick," Hoyd said breathily up the incline, "sex must have been intended as feminine, right?" He tried to clear his throat. Agony. "Mac, I don't want to commit you off the record or anything but who's your choice for Chairman? It's got to be good to beat old R. J. C."

"Some of us," soberly returned the Secretary, "yes, we've been thinking of Lorenzo, you know."

"All right," gasped Hoyd hastily. His mind registered: Not bad, might split the faggot vote.

Hamrin paused as he pressed the doorbell. In measured tones he said, "We don't want to rock the boat."

They were the first arrivals. Digger Davies was seated in the baleful rays of a sun lamp, chewing sunflower seeds, sipping a Metrecal-vodka mixture and listening to the wails of what he

explained was Suzanne Langer's favorite jazz fuguist. The tidy room was somehow cheerless and, getting drinks for his guests, Digger quickly cleared the air: "Genne had to go out. I think she thought we'd be happier having the place to ourselves. Make at home now." He flexed his hairy torso and soon returned with whiskies; the jazz had yielded to a beer commercial.

"So Ballantine got the Cacophonists."

"Don't you think these radio ads," Hamrin measured his drink with practiced eye, "are the end product of the Jacobean masque? I mean, where you devised a playlet to pay court to your hostess. Only now it's a product. *Sieg Heil!*" He raised his glass. Respectfully. Digger had made it dark brown. "To our next Chairman, boys."

"Is Bill Beobach tipping up?" Hoyd had to whisper it now.

"Jesus," commiserated Digger, "did a freshman theme do that to you, Hoyd?"

Hamrin smiled and shook his head. "No, Bill's persona seems in need of rest. I only wish somebody had been able to contact Orrin himself. All this is so indefinite. Dig, you do yourself right nicely here." He adjusted his horn-rims and glanced round at the armament of hi-fi. "Ever hear the Leos Janacek Quartet No. 2 on the Miracle label, by any chance?"

"That and the Hindemith Harp Sonata on the Karol," wistfully whispered Hoyd.

"If Hindemith ever struck a tune I haven't noticed it yet," Digger returned determinedly. "I hope Ax gets here."

"Sure." The secretary ponderously reprimed his Holmesian mouthpiece ("creating fire," as he liked to joke). "You could say Axel has discovered that bigamy and monogamy are the same. Having one wife too many, I mean."

The bell bonged and Digger struck his naked chest, moving to "get" the sound. Arrivals. They all felt grateful. As usual the conversation had been magnetically moving toward the rut of character assassination. It was Axel himself who arrived first, as it happened, and—"Talk of the devil, Ax!"—he was greeted with

especial warmth. Soon others drifted in, including anxious Ned Meilberg. They had a quorum and were about to begin when the bell plonged again and Sigmund Fleisch ushered himself apologetically in.

Scarfed Sigmund proved pathetically keen to demonstrate his juniority, sitting fatly on the floor and declining Digger's drink. Then Harvey Spiller, the smiling short-story teacher ("Dose me quickly, Digger, there's a dear"), dashed in and Sigmund got to his feet, tripping over his trousers to offer his square of Oaxaca rug and plumping himself on the nearby parquet. It was only after repeated requests that Digger could get Sigmund to accept a cup of cooking claret. The meeting was under way.

After some discussion Lorenzo was adopted as their common candidate, guaranteed therefore to get virtually a third of votes and be grateful to his supporters as a consequence. Mac Hamrin, pleasantly mellowed, was delegated to telephone and, to impersonations of the tweedy professor's staccato ("Great, man, great"), he duly seized the instrument. Five minutes later they knew the worst—"No dice. Our Brother Lawrence refuses to stand."

"But couldn't we prevail on Seymour to influence . . . ?"

"Not an earthly."

"Wouldn't be paseticah. Stout chap. All right, fellows, who's it going to be? We'd better start thinking fast."

In an hour's time most of them were growing bulbed. Hoyd was losing all his voice. But the pain was disappearing, too. He drank in gulps. Axel got out amicably: "Enoch tried to persuade me to the enemy only this afternoon. Will someone tell me who we can stand against the appalling Oxonian? Anyone. The alternative doesn't bear thinking of."

"Insufferable," they agreed, as a man.

The name of Norwell Cramm was mooted next.

"He'll get us nowhere fast," declared Spiller sharply. "Lose us all the undecided votes." He glanced round with his grin. "The 'difficult' members, shall we say."

Several heads went down in smiles at this: the Departmental records of the municipal colleges showed that on the whole, with certain honorable exceptions, the Chairmen selected were infrequently men of any consequence. It sometimes, semi-accidentally, happened that they were. But figureheads were not needed by these civil service teachers, none of whom really gave a good goddam what the outside world thought of their individual Departments, if anything at all. What was needed was a man who wouldn't "rock the boat," viz. a stooge who would supply the majority who had put him in power with pleasant programs and preference in promotion. This they were gathered, as a group, to select tonight. And, as Spiller had indicated, they were getting nowhere fast.

By this time Hoyd could barely speak in an Elizabethan aside. Victim of five hours' straight lecturing in a noisy classroom the day before, his larynx had revolted at the sudden increase of office after summer lack of practice, and had gone on the blink. Worse, Hoyd had then returned home to ask Marlene to paint the organ for him, hard. This like a good wife she had done. However, one of his permissively educated infants had seen fit to fill the bottle of throat-swab prescription with hair lotion. The astringent Bay Rum had cut unspeakably, in all senses, into the Hoydian tonsils and left him now with no voice at all. He could simply smile more sarcastically than ever, tap out his forbidden pipe, wag his moon-shaped face about, and fairly soak up the Scotch. He was suffering, as he tried to whisper, from overcommunication.

Someone waved a hand. "We're in trouble with the 'difficult' votes anyway. For some reason Paul Kristoff is mad as a monkey with Digger."

The Secretary nodded. "Dig pulled his leg t'other day."

"Did he 'catch'?" the culprit asked gleefully. Sweat trickled between the cheeks of his still bare chest.

"Evidently not. That's the trouble."

"I told you he wouldn't."

"And now he's going around looking as if he could chew nails."

Laughter and renewed libations. At this point Hoyd bent to breathe a tortured name.

"Who's that, Hoyd? Bobby Burns? What! Roman Gladberg? God, are you serious?"

"I got his last offprint only this afternoon." Hamrin gave a hollow laugh.

"The one about Kipling's influence on the Camel School at Buna?"

"Other way around, actually."

However, this was certainly a last-ditch possibility and as such was tossed around a bit. "Could we *trust* him?" was the focus of debate. Then Ned Meilberg raised his arm, the lobes of his ears glowing with indignation.

"I'm sorry, but I don't think I could." After a moment's righteous reflection he added emphatically, "No, my conscience wouldn't let me support Ro, I'm afraid."

"For heaven's sake, Ned, why?"

Meilberg shook his head, his eyes skating solemnly over the surface of the floor. "Certain things, associations, why, I don't think it'd be entirely proper for me—you'll find, however, that if Roman becomes our Chairman, the Department will be in an extremely embarrassing position in the future."

"Look, Ned, if you have some secret info on Roman, I think you ought to spit it out."

"Yeah, get it through your teeth, man."

"All I'm saying," came the reply after a second, "is that we don't want to elect a Comsymp."

"What the hell's that?" asked one of the drunker members.

"Sounds like a brand name," chipped in grinnin' Harvey Spiller.

Ned Meilberg was nodding with a sad expression now. "There's that, and. . . ." He let the word dangle in the air and then he sighed. "His dissertation at Duke, I mean. I didn't want to have to go into this but it's pretty generally acknowledged down there

that he plagiarized." He paused again, then brought out boldly, "Straight plagiarism. Common knowledge."

"Then why did they give him the degree?" Mac Hamrin skeptically inquired.

Ned shrugged. "Didn't want to ruin the poor fellow's career, I imagine." He effected another dramatic pause. "Roman's a very sick individual indeed, I fear."

"Oh to hell with that," said Harvey Spiller, "but if Ro's got something in his political past that's not quite tiggerty-boo, we ought to know about it. Maybe that was Orrin's trouble. We do have to work under the Silck."

"I don't know that I'm *exactly* at liberty to—but I can say this: Elizabeth Bentley, in her sworn testimony before a duly appointed House Committee," a slight froth, resembling strips of meringue, appeared on Meilberg's lips as he put more vehemence into his enthymemes, "it was during the time when Alger Hiss. . . ."

"Ah hell."

"He went to prison," Meilberg fired instantly back. "I'd have you know Hiss is nothing more than a felon. A common jailbird. A con." He added, fast, "You know he divorced his wife."

"Good God," Digger broke in suddenly, "we've got to agree on someone. Or it's the salt mines for all of us next semester for sure."

Silence fell after Digger's unusually tense interruption, for it carried more reality than any of Ned's objections. "Sweetening" his guests' drinks, turning down too bright lamps, replenishing the dip, Digger had not intervened much in the conversation before, content to do a spot of gum-massaging in a corner on his own, and meter from time to time the calories of his Wolschmidt; but now he spoke it was still half-nude and with conviction. They all knew what he said was true. For a teacher like Harvey Spiller from New Jersey, say, or Bill Beobach who commuted from Connecticut, life could be made more than intolerable by the wrong schedule, it could be made impossible. An unfriendly Chairman could, and would, assign enemies like these

to seven A.M. classes without any compunction whatsoever, and to get to Lincoln in time for a seven o'clocker from Greenwich or Paramus even the milk train wouldn't suffice. It was a grim-mish thought.

"When all's said and done," Mac Hamrin pronounced at last, carefully tamping his pipe as he did so, "we've got to agree on someone who won't, well, won't *rock the boat*."

At this remark all present nodded like clockwork and a fair percentage were made instinctively aware that they simply weren't going to agree on anyone at all. The telltale words "I see your point" began to introduce too many, too slurred speeches. And, sure enough, by the time the meeting did drunkenly dissolve in the dawn nothing had been accomplished at all. There was a vague idea they would "muddle through" on the morrow, possibly behind a reformed Lorenzo. But by this time Digger had had enough and was turning them courteously if firmly out. He had his ankle-strenghtener exercises to do before he got to bed.

Sigmund Fleisch drew tentatively near Hoyd in the frenzy of the final drinks. "Frankly, I cannot undeniably understand where we got. One asks what was decided upon this evening."

"One does, indeed," agreed Hoyd, whose voice had come back a bit with the booze.

"Well, I should like to show you this." Sigmund held out a battered blue book. Hoyd took it dutifully. "An extr-r-r-r-aordinary effort."

"Be glad to look it over, Sig." Hoyd pocketed the essay, cursing his colleague. "English 1, huh?"

"Such a girl. Ve best I've read since ages." Before slipping off he added, "Give me your opinion. Maybe a genius, not?"

Everyone was merry. Harvey Spiller, in truth quite high, did a pantomime of inebriety, groping for a table when proffered a last reviver—"Nothing for me thanks, Dig, I'm driving."

"The hair of the dog," cried Hamrin, holding out his glass while Hoyd now limped about, clowning with his hooker in one

hand steadied by a sling made from his necktie. They were patting him on the back over the recovery of his voice. Even experienced Axel seemed somewhat shot-away.

"It's like they say in the Buick ads"—he swayed as he polished off the shot—"driving this stuff makes me feel the man I am."

"Come one, come all," called Hamrin curtly. "Thanks a whole heap, Dig."

"Goonight Bill. Goonight Lou. Goonight May." Spiller imitated Eliot's imitation of a Cockney accent. And he, Axel, Mac Hamrin, and Hoyd left in a contented clutch.

Outside, in the wet street, it was cool and quiet and clear. They wove along in the general direction of buses and subway stops.

"Digger does put up a damn good glass of Scotch."

"I only wish," Hoyd croakingly complained, "I hadn't thirty papers ahead of me before I can sack it tonight."

"And I have an eight o'clocker tomorrow. You ever tried teaching Lieder and Lovett on a hangover?"

"Digger's a good guy," Axel remarked. "Maybe Genne doesn't like that hairpiece on his chest."

"Too bad about Genne." Spiller picked up the hint sadly, but they weren't in the mood for post-mortemming, it was plain, the night was too pure for that.

"I may be unduly plastered," said Hoyd, "and tell me if I'm wrong, but so far as I can make out we go into Convocation Room tomorrow absolutely in the dark."

"Something will turn up," said Hamrin and at least two voices chorused "Micawber!" Their mood was placid, they couldn't start over again. And when Axel raised the matter of the dismissed Dr. Bunch, lying at the heart of the whole thing, and pointed out how little they had done in that direction, the Secretary answered, "Trouble is, how much do we really know about the *facts of the case?*"

"True," agreed Spiller with alacrity. "The student newspaper alleges that Orrin was flung out of the room, they have a girl

called Lester in the class who swears he was physically hustled. On the other hand, the Council's press rep swears that papers were simply served in the normal manner."

"What's that?" asked Axel shortly. "I mean, the normal manner."

Hoyd was thinking: Lester, Lester, wasn't that the name on the paper Sigmund had just given him? He said, "*Divide et impera*. CCMCE policy. The less we know the more hamstrung we'll be about doing anything solid."

"I think you have a point there, Hoyd. Of course, if only Orrin would come forward himself and help clear up some legitimate doubts . . ."

"His lawyer says he shouldn't. Listen." Hoyd stopped, reached for Hamrin's lapel, missed. "Wait a minute, Mac. You don't mean to say you're sliding off, too? Dammit, the one thing about these subway colleges we all agree on is that you can get fired only for the wrong reasons. What you can't get chucked out for is gross inefficiency."

"Or rampant homosexuality," Axel agreed angrily.

They strolled in silence for a while. Hoyd's feet, like his mind, were wandering. The sidewalk was a quicksand. "Thirty-four papers," he got out groggily. "And I have to correct each comma in every single one of them."

"I had a Luis Carroll in today." Harvey Spiller spelled it out.

"A Puerto Rican Alice." Hamrin smiled. "Ah me. My best was a poem that ended in a heroic couple."

"What can you expect," demanded Axel, "in a country that spends more on television *repairs* than it does on books?"

They recognized the enemy. Parr, Perry Mason, the rest. Their students spent nine hours a day for four years on courses that required their brains, to say nothing of the homework they luggered back to overcrowded apartments each night. This constant grind of scientific thinking repleted the rational faculties and none among those present on that Riverdale street could blame these particular citizens of the new philistia for escaping in an

emotion bath, rather than relaxing through attention-demanding art. After a little good-natured demurral the group broke up and Hoyd found himself alarmingly alone. He yanked himself off to a subway. Somewhere or other he surfaced mordantly and started limping faster.

Frankly he was feeling rather marvelous. What's more, his voice had really come back. He tried it once or twice, in the deserted street, and it sounded effective. A cross between Edward G. Robinson and the Kingston Trio. *Where the hell was her?* It was suddenly dark. He groped like a clown. From the aspect of the locals he realized he had landed in what the real-estate ads called Col. Univ. vic., or South Harlem. A girlish voice from the neighborhood of his navel muttered softly, "Wanna come wif me, honey?"

Hoyd started. "Where?"

"Gloria-Mae give yuhall a good time."

He peered, grasping his pipe for steadyng purposes. In the coppery canescence of the street's dimmed glare he discerned her prurient face, the hard hill of a nipple, under purple cloth.

"Who's Gloria-Mae?"

"Ah give a *good* time," she insisted stubbornly.

"Don't be ridiculous," he said, but as she swayed ahead he found himself following. She was all tight and shiny and, passing under lighting, her buttocks bloomed into a glazed basin.

"Hey, wait a minute," he said, catching her in the doorway. He teetered, uncomprehending. "You've grown," he accused. "Oh, I see." He stumbled at the step. For some reason he took off his watch and began feeling in a pocket.

"Glory-Mae charge *tuh* dollah," came indignantly from the darkness.

"Oh Christ," he gasped, suddenly coming to himself. "God, what is this." He plunged off, her honey choral clinging to his ears—"Change yo' min' . . . any time . . . jus' ask foh Glory-Mae."

Lunging past tenements, each more decrepit than the last,

Hoyd saw lights. Impassive figures stood about a tawdry doorway, inscribed with exotic signs. Chinese, maybe?

THE RADIANT SCARF

Reador & Advisor

Appian Ballroom

Love Thy Father and Thy Mother

Some meeting had been taking place, men were emerging from a hall, colored and white alike. Suddenly Hoyd all but pitched flat on his face. A severe, almost reprimanding figure strode out and down the sidewalk to a waiting car. An aquiline, perceptive face became visible, then a shut pane of glass. Unmistakable. "Orrin!" he shouted.

It couldn't be. The car drove off. Hoyd staggered to the door. A sign in a lower window read: Regular Op. Soft Dolls Steady Holy Love 2nd. Floor.

"Correct me," he began to a bystander, "if, well, I'm incorrect, but wasn't that a certain Dr. Bunch?"

There came a guffaw, gentle crowding, the face of the Negro went serious in front of him. A sense of drama hung softly in the air. After a moment Hoyd said, "Thank you, I must be off," turned on his heel and went.

He reached home in a cab, the sense of achievement with which he had left the party utterly shot. Impossible. The apartment was silent, the waiting papers towering over the murder mystery on his desk. He sat with a thud, saw that he'd brought back a copy of the day's college paper, started correcting. It was an activity he could by now perform in his sleep. Reador and Advisor, indeed. Hell, it couldn't have been Orrin. *What I Expect to Get Out of College*: agreement, lack of transition, case. *A Famous Historical Personage I Should Most Like to Meet*: run-on sentence, dangling modifier. Pn.

What incredible illiteracy it all represented. One student seemed to have given up completely and begun solving a man's

problem at the back of his book: *Experiment 2—Fractional Distillation of an Alcohol-Water Mixture*; Convert two 60 ml. specimen bottles to 50 ml. measuring cylinders by. . . . Hoyd's head throbbed. His eyes smarted as if all these students were individually and severally squeezing lemons into them. Chewing chalk. Drowning in dishwater. Who'd said that? Wolfe? Maybe there was a phrase or two inside that verbal porridge still. No city high school teacher could hope to cope. Orrin Bunch in Negro Harlem. Crazy. Obviously he'd been a chimera. Orrin couldn't be all *that* late for chow, surely.

WHY I DO NOT GO TO MY SYNACOCUE

Disdaining the blue book given him, this student had elected to write under the letterhead of Jetsmooth Launder-rite Inc. Hoyd hoped the piece had not been imported. Help at home was hardly unknown, though in the case of most Lincoln parents it was more of a hindrance.

I do not go to my local Synagogue to worship G-d because its Sabbath laws are outmoded in this present-day. The laws say that a Jew is not allowed on the sabbath to: turn on lights, cook with a fire, carry. . . .

Hoyd tilted his chair. A sudden memory of his own childhood, and of the injuries he had inflicted on his father, assailed him. Coming in late, a whack on the cheek, his father bursting into tears, his own defections, then finally one day—"You ought to let the doc look you over, Poppa." Light was whitening the sky and Hoyd was weakening. He pushed at his eyes. Drunken tears. But, well, *was* it worth it? His gaze dropped to a memorandum from one of the sillier Lincoln Deans. It came round at the start of every term. "Prepare thoroughly and take great joy in your teaching," he read slowly. "Your students will respond by giving *everything they have*."

It was enough of everything they had for tonight. Enough "liberal arts," as the engineers called anything that wasn't engi-

neering. He gave the last paper A for Agnosticism and heaped the pile. Each minute that passed made the image of Orrin more of a mirage. The copy of *The Eagle* announced that one Jerry Blass had walked off with another weight-lifting contest while sundry matmen, bootsters, parriers, and hoopsters had nicked, flailed, whipped, creamed or gnashed their respective adversaries. Technical tensions over student elections. An editorial, signed Ivan Vogel so not anonymous, mourned "student apathy," citing the fact that the Dramatic Society's presentation of *Medea* had sold eighteen tickets whereas the Senior Class's *Whoop-Up* was booked out in advance. The center spread—and spread, thought Hoyd with eyebrows rising, it was—revealed a vista of what would seem to be the finest female Sitzplatz this side of the Sahara.

MISS SUPERIOR POSTERIOR 7

Fitzgeraldine Sullivan is a soph with a lot behind her; Fitz lives in "lower Manhattan," studies the three D's (and men) and fully intends to become an Actress.

Closing the paper Hoyd stood up. He ought to be preparing something for the MLA after Christmas, by rights. A short talk on Milton, maybe? Almost anything on *Lycidas* was automatically accepted. Before the ordeal of trying to get into bed without waking Marlene he fingered the dog-eared blue book Sigmund had given him. He opened and read. What was all the shooting match about? Suddenly his hair started crawling. His scalp peeled off. It was like coming up for air. There was a splendid isolation about this amazing essay.

It was a vignette, jerky and nontransitional, of New York City life, but Hoyd trembled at the impact of—yes—perfect pitch. There was nothing in the piece that showed training. It was the sort of thing which, arriving with the sequacious slush in the outer offices of *The New Yorker*, say, would have been immediately referred for a rejection slip. All the same, there was the

sheer autonomous privilege of vision about the non-sequitur style, a nice wild look to the imagery, a darkening of the horizon of consciousness in personal eclipse, a kind of scampering imaginative protest against all the sort of symbolic fiction his colleagues annually atrophied in their careerist offprints.

This was "removed" writing, all right. No, the bird of purity had flown over these few sentences and Hoyd was struck with that shock of early Hamsun stories, that arabesque of insight which alone was the terrible perfection of the intuitive soul. It was *truth like a blow*.

Turning the blue book over he looked at the scrawled name again. Carol Lester. Of course, Hoyd said semiconsolingly to himself, it was horribly Joycean. Though at the end of the essay, instead of the expected Trieste-Zürich-Paris, had been added *Penned on the IRT*. Wet pipe, heart held, Hoyd tucked the essay in a drawer. Vainly he tried to get his sarcastic smile going again. There had been one moment in his life. For anyone who had been in a war the only moment of verity whatsoever. He thought of Forster's "Only connect." Associations aroused before understanding could play on their context. Hard to explain. Epiphany, he guessed. Musil had it somewhere. The subjective projected into and brutally compounded with the object. Combat did it, all right. He'd never forgotten that. His eyes rose to their usual, trifling gaze. Yes, he had been humbled, he knew, by the absolute angel of art.

Leaving Digger's den Sigmund walked down the hill and through side streets toward the nearest bus stop. He strolled slowly, striving to imitate Stephen on Sandymount strands. What he was wondering was whether the new Chairman they elected would support his personal Ford, an application for assistance in a lifelong desire—to spend 18 hours 45 minutes in Dublin enacting an actual Bloomsday, pub by pub, street by street. For next summer it would fall on a Thursday, perfect.

For a second a rush of joy for Joyce's great celebration of art so

filled Sigmund's heart that his usual ache of insecurity was blissfully stilled. He was even able to contemplate with affection a group of corner boys on a stoop. With shoulders hunched, they lounged elaborately in slashed satin jackets, *cinquecento* candy-store cowboys, with those coiffed locks. Sigmund passed, nodding at their internationality; in a few years' time the Peking Acelets would recognize the Brooklyn Blades without much effort. To say nothing of the Russian young—the *bezprizornye*.

The trouble was there was nowhere you could fantasy in the modern city, and the modern city was the world. Ah, how he remembered! It was the fantasy of adolescence that gave you strict company. Sigmund had never felt alone amid the lonely pines of his own Germanic youth. But in this New York it was different. You were caught. It was all done for you on a tired, affected level. As a boy, you could run up an escalator the wrong way, overturn garbage baskets, pour sugar in the gas tanks of parked autos, but it wasn't the same. No relief to the psyche. Sometimes it was hard even to catch breath. Sigmund thought of the faschings of his youth, and the even less inhibited post-fasching katzenjammers that had followed them—and his wide, worried cheeks pinkened, while behind his eyes moisture disgracingly prickled. So long ago. So fast gone, all that joy. Now this hostile activity. Slaves in clean (well, cleanish) collars. Again came the cry within him—*Shall I be reappointed?* If only he could chance accidentally on the President, in a corridor maybe, tell him he had known the great, the only Schleppfuss, yes personally at Goslar. . . . Sigmund stopped. Sinister vista.

A window to the right was open. Through a gap in gathered heads he saw the screen. A man in a surgical coat was gesticulating. All at once a gray-haired individual hove into view. He was clutching himself. With wondering eyes he lurched, for a second he seemed about to dash at the cameras (which urgently retreated), then he gasped for air, his stiffening heels churned in the carpet, his knees buckled like a boxer's, and he fell backwards and sideways writhing against the waiting doctor whose

coat, Sigmund perceived, was embroidered with the name of the sponsor's product. VITA! A blemish cream. Someone was looking at the clock. Sigmund smiled to himself as he resumed his Joycean tread. Such acting these days. He shook his head. "Same old six-and-seven," he said aloud. They would know tomorrow night.

In fact, they did not. The meeting, confined to a little less than fifty minutes, proved abortive. Norwell Cramm and R. J. C. tied thrice. Katzman didn't attend. Enoch "acted." They adjourned with the promise of another meeting the following week and the atmosphere in the corridors of Calhoun Hall, where at the best of times it was tough to get to the john without the whole college knowing, became veritably blistering. The next week Roman and R. J. C. tied at the start, and on no less than thirteen further secret ballots neither succeeded in mustering the majority required by the bylaws. Again they had to adjourn.

All factions were now scared rigid that if, as they had been given to understand from above, the next Saturday's special meeting failed to produce agreement on a new Chairman, the President would step in and make the appointment himself. And *—horrescunt referentes*—he was legally empowered to do so with an import from outside. No group wanted this. Promotional politicking and future course reservations would be shot to hell by such an action. Meantime, the sundry compact clans were jockeying like mad: these principally included the younger men, hard hit by the refusal of Lorenzo, the constantly shifting fairy group, the Phippsites, the plain Pharisees (in the Christian, abused sense of that term), and the purely anti-Katzman section. This last, which had shown itself strong in the penultimate meeting, consisted of a number of members who had no real position in Departmental politics at all but just detested Katzman, himself now preserving a virtually Bunchian distance in the affair. Then on the eve of the third meeting, which most had come to anticipate as a walkover for R. J. C. (since by now both Norwell and Roman had stood down as candidates) the anti-Katzman section was weakened by a last-minute hazard.

For it happened that the Poetry Society's presentation of Mankurian Held coincided with this election meeting. Now, during his own period at Lincoln a decade ago (and the Buddhist beatnik was surprisingly vain about his age), Mankurian had been in one of R. J. C. Phipps's Elizabethan classes and there developed a sort of dewy-eyed devotion for the man. When, two years ago, Held's now celebrated broadside *Aaargh!* had been banned as "of questionable mailability" by the U.S. postal authorities, and his gift for self-promotion had thereafter got going (to launch him at last into the pages of *Life*), the "young" poet began expressing considerable public indebtedness to his old teacher. "I love him," he had been reported as saying in the press on several occasions, adding where obligatory, "Like I dig that far-out talent, see."

In itself this made a neat publicity gimmick—the daring Bohemian showing a paradoxical affection for the old supporter of tradition and order. But the old supporter was anything but of that opinion. He was horrified. For a considerable time he had been dodging Held's beery advances. The purulent poet was a real embarrassment to the Cadillac Professor, whose TV audiences, after all, consisted in the main of old ladies of both sexes. No, Rather Jolly Clever didn't much like being reminded he even taught at Lincoln now. "I *lecture* in New York," he liked to say on introduction. So when the choice had come to run the gantlet of a Held-held campus that Saturday and risk confronting his smelly fan, or forego the Chairmanship, well, R. J. C. seemed nervously to have accepted the latter.

So his permed pompadour and London shoes had not shown. That was all there was to it. The anti-Katzman *Bund* put up Appius. Not nearly such a good candidate. Even so, such was the hate for Katzman on the part of some that four secret ballots were tied. The number of blanks was especially disconcerting. Fence-sitters—watching the way the wind blew, and then coming in for the winner, like those barons whose similar actions Shakespeare had dignified as models of English sagacity. Then

Norwell fell two behind Appius in the fifth vote, standing against his will, so he said. This was grave indeed. Only one more vote was now needed by Appius to secure the majority constitutionally requisite for election. One more *vutt*. The younger men exchanged glum glances, as the tellers plied their chalk about the board, marking the score. Venom crawled the floor. Paul Kris-toff, who had found such meetings an increasing strain ever since the installation of contemporary furniture in Convocation Room, vainly essayed to rally the fighting fairy factions.

All at once Digger Davies rose to his feet and proposed the ingeniously Byronic Mesrob Mins. Mac Hamrin, second. Anyone was better than Appius. Cramm withdrew. To the amazement of almost everyone in the entire Department, and certainly all out of it, Mesrob proceeded to scrape the majority necessary to get in. The tellers recounted twice.

"I am mer-most grateful to the Deputtment. In signifying its pleasure in this actual manner."

Everyone looked slightly stunned. Axel and Hoyd swopped winks. At least it wasn't R. J. C. They knew, too, that Digger had suggested Mesrob since he was at least known to be in favor of doing something for Bunch. All the same. . . .

"Great, great." Lorenzo broke the silence by clapping Mesrob on the frank back as he sat, tight-lipped, long-locked, down. "Christamighty, man, I congratulate you. Congratters, Mes."

And with this decision they were stuck. Quickly, as the meeting broke up, those who had voted against the new Chairman-elect hastened forward to shake his hand and felicitate him with an especial warmth, designed to demonstrate how unshakably they had been on his side all along.

Five

A month passes in a montage:

INT . . . DAY . . . Jackson class . . . Sigmund Fleisch seen lecturing on English (Joyce) One, hammocky eyes skywards raised . . . dressed like a sailor, Fitz Sullivan stretches seat, rustle-crosses legs . . . behind her behind Richie Weiss reacts.

INT . . . DAY . . . Dance Lounge section of the Weintroub Center . . . before juke-box Mark De Vayo deep in the throes with blonde on the floor . . . (silver tinlight, the gaudy blare) . . . girl smooches him real heavily . . . Sylvia Hantmann sourly stares.

INT . . . DAY . . . Another class . . . Digger Davies enters, starts handing out examination books . . . students react . . . one spits on his, another tears up a reading list.

EXT . . . DAY . . . Suburban Street . . . (yard mud, twit trees, all crabapple posts) . . . Sudden glimpse of elegant Orrin Bunch, efficaciously wheeling a supermarket dolly . . . he passes two old ladies, who turn and stare, then gossip, animated. . . .

INT . . . NIGHT . . . Eddie Drosa hits the books in his Bronx apartment, helping himself to Nodoz . . . mother reading Russian next door . . . sister Illona looks in, Ed waves her out . . . she flouncing goes.

INT . . . NIGHT . . . Seymour Katzman's apartment on Claremont Avenue . . . called to the telephone from study lined with antique rifles and filled with boxes of notecards—we see him talking with the President on a split screen . . . The President is asking him something (oh aging ghost, malign black suit) . . . Katzman's face wears patient mask . . . He is shaking his head in a resigned way.

EXT . . . DAY . . . Students arriving early classes . . . Carol Lester pauses, strokes a stray setter on her way through guarded gates . . . Stanley Schochet joins her.

INT . . . NIGHT . . . The stage in a television studio seen through the glass partition of the Control Booth . . . A plaque announces *The R. J. C. Phipps Show* . . . R. J. C. seen broadcasting one of his weekly book talks before urgent cameras . . . spiked mustaches, high white hair . . . we see him on the monitors from the various cameras, as well as through the glass partition.

INT . . . DAY . . . Alpha Pi frat house, decks of cards . . . Spider Prowse . . . two brothers playing ping-pong well, one of them (yes, Jesse Paul) smoking a Tampax . . . radio blare, the cave-roof rocks.

INT . . . DAY . . . On floodlit stage betighted Jerry Blass jerks up bar loaded with weights . . . The audience roars . . . gliding applause.

INT . . . NIGHT . . . Another TV station . . . two booths for quiz contestants . . . Richie Weiss is seen in one, a tall assured Great Dane in another . . . Rich is asked, "What was Grandma Moses famous for? . . . shakes balding pate—"Pancakes?" . . . M.C. (all smiles) smilingly gives the question to the other contestant who smilingly (all smismiles) corrects it . . . "Painting it is!" . . . But another chance . . . "What was the name of the Sultan in the *Arabian Nights?*" . . . Throttled Richie lunges owl-like, perplexed—"Shushkebab?" . . . "No, no, it isn't Shushkebab" . . . but still another, and the last—"You're a bright college boy now, Mr. Weiss, what's a

tu quoque?" . . . embarrassed beam, oh Richie knows, he knows and knows and knows . . . "It's a thing Charles Boyer dons, or Queen Mary yet" . . . smiling M.C. this time rapidly (all smiles) passes the question on to His Smileness and Richie (oh shambling gait, aggrieved eyes) moons out of the booth.

INT . . . DAY . . . Meeting of *The Eagle* staff . . . the editor, Ivan Vogel, is looking disgustedly at a group of photographs of girls, mostly in bathing suits, prominently exposing their "lower backs."

INT . . . DAY . . . Gymnasium . . . basketball tourney . . . the teams trade baskets . . . audience yawns.

FADE IN: Panoramic slow-motion shot of the detonation of a gigantic nuclear weapon, its mushroom-smoke darkening the arid proving grounds. Seen from Monticello, THE COLLEGE'S FIRST BOMB! The following superimposed title dissolves in:
"Who Needs Teachers Now?"

Six

“Madison, Wisconsin? 4151? Is Golda Jean at home there, please?”

“Hold a minute. I’ll go get her.”

“Eddie? I knew that was you soon as I heard it was New York on the line. Darling of you to call. Mother, get off the phone, would you *per-leaze*?”

“How are you, Jeany?”

“Good. School?”

“Still standing, I guess.”

“I mean, do you like it, how does it appeal to you this term?”

“A dog.”

“I beg your pardon.”

“Frankly, Golda Jean, I’ve been so busy I haven’t had time to think.”

“Studying? Mnmm.”

“Mostly things like ohms.”

“What kind of poems, did you say?”

“Forget it. Listen, what you bin doing with yourself, beyond dragging that eighty by a hundred of yours around at the sterling speed of a snail?”

“We-ell. Here’s a bit of unusual information. I mean, I was working on my History homework when you called.”

“I’ll bet you’re booked solid into the week after next.”

"Heavens! Dates? I am *not*. I mean I . . . "

"I'm counting the days till Thanksgiving. Dad says I can have the car. You're coming, Golda Jean, aren't you?"

"I fully intend to visit."

"Great. I'm counting the days. I haven't so much as lamped a judy, I'm telling ya, since . . ."

"What's that you say, Edward?"

"For one thing I don't have time. Frankly, right now it's all I can do to sit down."

"What?"

"Nothing. Just said this is a two-bit town. Without you, I mean. Only wish we could hit the flick tonight together, doll. *Ten Commandments* at the local. Do you read me, Golda Jean?"

"Heavens, Eddie, I have to run. That poor man . . ."

"Who? Listen, if I hang now, I'll take another swim in my money-bin and call you next weekend, how's that, Jeany?"

"I have to *run*. He's . . . I mean, I do want to see you. Please convey my regards to your sister."

"Illona? Sure. She's graduating Music and Arts midyear, and joining me at Lincoln next term, howja *like* that?"

"*I'll* say."

"First night you hit town, I mean. I'll pick you up six-thirty. My last class that day is five."

"Bye now, Eddie."

"Goodby, Golda Jean."

"Greetings, cats. Er-catalysts, that is. Like I just racked up an eighty-three on my Math 8 test. What say, Stanley. Ira. Mind if I walk to the subway with you guys? You work out that sunset problem good, Stan ol' man? Hey, what's this, Stanley sport? Y'look like you're about to blow a gasket any minute. Any *second*, Stan, and the half's only half through yet. Don't he, Ira? Now, now, don't misunderstand me, Stan, I wouldn't want you to get me wrong. I know jus' what it's like at the end of the day, believe me, so I do. Truly. Now, you want I should walk with you,

Mr. Schochet? This is posit-ive-ly my last offer, ha! ha! And by the way, you read today's *Eagle*, ol' man? Ira? Well, I'd like for you to do so, really I would. There's a little story going the rounds about a lot of mailboxes being bashed in on campus by a student. Yessir. The guards are out for him, Stan. Say they're sure it's the same guy tore up all the *Lifes* in jolly ol' Wino not so long ago. A gone cat. Yeh, some angelheaded hipster flown all the way from matsos to kosher ham, old man. I'm jus' telling ya, Stan, no call for offense. Like there are times—so you don't believe me, Stan, I can see it in your half-shaven face, but so help me I'm telling the truth—there are times when I come to the end of a day at Linc an' wonder whether it's been worth living. You're running and running. Start off at dawn wit' breakfast at top speed, then you dress while reading Physics' notes for a test, next you fight the subways with enough books under your arm to crease a weight lifter yet. I mean, we aren't all Jerry Blasses, are we? I'm telling ya, Stan ol' man, the reason why girls are tough to find in Engineering is that they can't schlep those texts aroun'. Guess that's why Ira likes them courses the best, ha! ha! No seagulls to disturb his rest. And above all *no crap*. So offa we go, all set to fly to the moon, on a dim-lit train, straining our eyes out on you know differential equations an' semiconductor-diode characteristics instead of on the metaphors of the doll in the opposite seat. Yeh, the on'y curves we can see after a few years at dear ol' Linc are strictly parabolic, man. I tell ya, I haven't had time to read a paper for three whole weeks. I don't know the simplest thing about the outside world, Stanley sport. What's with Eddie and Liz and Debbie and Tuesday and Wednesday? Who's driven into whose swimming pool lately? Why, I don't even know who the new Miss Schweingold is a'ready, I'm barely conscious of what State I'm in. Except perpetual hysteria, ha! ha! Seriously, fellers, I'd forgotten all about that prof in the English Department who was fired till I read this here *Eagle* today. I mean, one minute that herring's flunking us like ninepins and the next—mop!—they toss that nebbish out

on his ass. Wow! Howja *like* that? So the Chairman of the Department resigns and now here's our campus rag saying it was prob'ly 'cos the guy was advising Students for a Sane Nuclear Policy. Yeh, all six of 'em. That march on Washington in July was what did it. All those kids sitting on the steps and the cops cartin' 'em off, one by one, like so many dogs. Jesus! Well, the guy must of approved, so they hurl him out. That's what *The Eagle* says here, Stan, an' I always believe everything that's printed, don' I? So off we go, sport, Math, Chem, Physics, Drafting. Then more Drafting, Physics, Chem, and Math. *To be an engineer*. What glory, ol' gimp, think of it. Graduation day. The college seal, the sign of the bagel, stamped on our chests, our parents standing aroun' saying, 'At's me boy!' Then all that money pouring in, fighting the girls offa our backs. Then 'Get married, get married' for all day long. So you're stuck with a lot of color telephones. RCA shoelace-tiers. Perfumed gasoline. Electronic towels. And then the kids, ol' chap. Think of the kids. Real eyes that open and shut. And say, Stan sport, who's this girl you going with? This Carol kookie. Oh what a weirdie that one is! Is she nuts or sumpin'? I mean, wearing that rubber cigarette holder so she can smoke with her butt tucked back of one ear. Anyhow, for all this we visit the delightful li'l subway stop ahead of us now twice a day ten times a week, more if you go to evening school, have Saturday classes, somewhere's 'bout eight hundert times a year all tol'. Sixty-eight steps from the upper platform to the lower, I've counted 'em, ol' man, you try it some day. All that porcelain. The chewing-gum machine on third column to the left as you come out, it hasn't given any gum for two years now, did you *know* that, Stan old man, did you now? I'm up on all the essentials, ain't I? So onward and upward to our classes at last, past the four English majors sprawled on the grass with their lucky, lucky sweethearts. Frankly, ol' man, the on'y thing my hands have had time for lately has been my slide rule, if you know what I mean. They're useful, them slide rules, know it? They make good hammers, irresistible nutcrackers, and you can

even roll pizza dough with mine by this time. So straight on through in class ever'day till six and with luck ring home by eight. Five minutes free time and then for the homework, hit the books again. The idea is to eat supper fast and maybe steal three minutes relaxation with the Texaco show, but there's always that crutty English teach who must run a permanent fight with his wife, judging from the assignments the guy's been piling on us lately. And all so goddam useless, y'know what I mean. Useless? Hey, you can say *that* again. My worst enemy shouldn't have such a bes' friend yet. So finally to sleep, Stan, perchance to dream. Dream, yeah, of tomorrow's quiz, or thy unfinished homework. And the weekends, those lovely weekends working in the local drugstore. Or, if you're a girl, slinging hash in a diner and getting mauled. All for what? *To beat it!* So howja like it, Stan old man, howja like it, cat? Sweat it out till you drop dead. No. Here's where I broom off. I go this way. Remember? Stan, you're slipping. I take the Pelham Bay."

And Stanley Schochet smiled at George.

INT . . . DAY . . . Classroom in Jackson . . . show English One as before . . . MCS . . . short, tubby Fleisch is glancing at his watch, end of class, the students pack, abrupt bell clangs . . .

F L E I S C H

Quite, please. So my friend James Joyce remain' very much *alife* . . . Until the end, when . . . next time I will speak about . . . MCS . . . the students mill . . . Richie eyes Fitz . . . who moves to go . . . Jesse Paul leans forward . . .

P A U L

You wan' you give her sumpin' diff'ren', Rich?

W E I S S

Sure, but how? There are no new ways.

P A U L

The hell there ain't. How 'bout taking her one of them fifteen-minute airplane rides out at Amityville, how 'bout that, whadja say, Rich?

WEISS

You crazy, Jess?

PAUL

Nah. Try it.

TALYACAN

It's differen'. Like Jess says.

WEISS

It sure is. You must be out of your mind. First of all, I know she wouldn't go up with me and secondly, I'm "chicken" myself to fly in one of those "kites" with heavy wings.

PAUL

Aw. This weekend.

WEISS

Shevouth?

PAUL

Summer, y'crum. This is Thanksgiving yet.

WEISS

Ah. Well, boy, I got things to do.

PAUL

Who hasn't?

MCU . . . heaping texts, Weiss owlish smiles . . . CAMERA PANS, exits him out of room, down in the elevator, he crosses the campus and walks over the moat towards Alpha Pi's house . . . ad libs o.s. are heard . . .

INT. Back room in frathouse . . . CAMERA TRUCKS to small dark individual stashing bottle in jacket . . . yellow vest and wide striped shirt . . . face so scarred with turpitude it makes you dizzy to look at it (v. Brecht's King of the Stockyards) . . . scorn spills from (even) his eyes . . .

WEISS

Spider?

PROWSE

Come in, m'boy, come in. Have a touch of, ah, imbibation?

WEISS

Er, no thanks. I don't trust your "hooch."

P R O W S E

You don't mind if I do, assume.

CS . . . Prowse and Weiss . . . Richie sits . . . Prowse, having drunk, rises and stands behind him at b.g. . . .

W E I S S

Vortex in the Brookmont?

P R O W S E

Threw a shoe. Rip away half his hoof, my man.

W E I S S

Well, Cloudy. The Bremner Handicap? He must of. You *said* . . .

P R O W S E

Knock himself out, lad, knock himself out afore ever he got on the track hitting his head against his stall.

W E I S S

Oh no. What about Louisiana Lass, Spider? In the three-thirty, I mean? That must of been a "cinch" surely.

P R O W S E

Sorry, lad. Cracked a sesamoid.

W E I S S

What's that?

P R O W S E

Bone in left front foot. The little lady won't be runnin' agin this season. Foot's in a cast.

W E I S S

But what can I *do*, Spider? I on'y got ten bucks left already.

P R O W S E

Can you make it twenty?

W E I S S

No.

P R O W S E

Absolutely no more bread, my man?

W E I S S

No more "greenbacks" absolutely, Spider.

P R O W S E

Fifteen.

WEISS

You got something "warm" then?

PROWSE

A cert.

WEISS

Twelve fifty.

PROWSE

I'll accept it.

WEISS

You'll accept it! Well, what's the bit?

PROWSE

Tomorrow. Four o'clock. Miss Dahlia.

WEISS

And this is a "good egg," Spider, you sure?

PROWSE

Pos-it-ive-ly.

WEISS

It'd better be good.

PROWSE

Trust me.

CS . . . Exchange of bills . . . a transaction strictly, in the French, *de poche à poche* . . . Richie groans, gets up to go . . . CAMERA TRUCKS BACK exiting Rich, dubiously, stained slip of paper in left mitt . . . Spider Prowse delicately pockets . . . wordless laughter . . . he scantily prowls . . . scratches a wizened head . . . then his corkscrew legs.

"Blessed are the pure in heart," mocked Lewy Jantaneo, "for they shall inhibit the earth."

The staff of the student paper were morosely contemplating the print-smudged pull of the next day's contender in the local pinup stakes.

MISS SUPERIOR POSTERIOR 34

A well rounded education includes the rear porch! Such is stun-

ningly proved by today's Hetaera with Heft, U. So. Sue Libermann. . . .

Ivan Vogel was disgustedly regarding the gatefold blowup which showed, in the main, a pair of adventitious sway-back shorts, back view, totally filled.

"Fitz'll be mad. This Libermann pallulah is real competition." Lew turned the picture upside down. "No, this is the ginchiest."

The boy with colorless hair, whose sleepy lids seemed perpetually threatening to close completely, said softly, "Another girl born with a bed on her back."

They looked at Tommy Dehl. Carol Lester had not come in. Since taking up with Stanley Schochet her relations with this old-time insulter had become practically ghastly.

"Firm as a banker," grinned Sports Ed Waynett Marsh.

Ivan Vogel, however, grimaced. "I don't know, it seems an absurd waste of space to me. Have we really got to go on with this thing right through to Carny Week next June?"

"'Atsa will dey majawitty pawdy," energetically mimicked Jantaneo. "Jesus," he added in his normal voice, "but Fitz puts out like sixty, don' she? This is going to be a close race."

"Oh look." Until this moment Sylvia Hantmann had been baleful behind her screen of smoke, her legs incredibly extended. "We aren't kids any more. How childish can you get? Next thing there'll be a bunny club on campus. Iv is right. We ought to scrap this feature now we know Bunch was fired for accepting the Sane Nuclear Advisorship."

"Aych," grunted Lewy, "such space you don't get every day, my Syl."

"You're just jealous," Tommy Dehl good-naturedly told her. His pale hair hung in curls. Barbers were costly in the city and Carol Lester was no longer cutting it for him.

"Come to think of it, you'd do pretty good yourself in the comp, Syl."

"Can you schnorks come to the point a minute," the editor interrupted, as he observed Sylvia flushing. "Here we are at Thanksgiving already and CCMCE still refuse to say a word about Bunch. Now Students for Sane say they're certain he was axed because he'd accepted their faculty advisorship and okayed that march they made on Washington when five fellows and a girl were flung in jail."

"And six more Commies bit the dust," said Tommy Dehl lethargically. "Ours was the generation which beat us."

"Filthy," snapped Sylvia Hantmann.

Even Lewy agreed—"A real meatball rap by the Council."

"And Bunch himself can't, or won't, confirm what they say. He's been advised not to talk till his hearing comes up next February."

"It'll be interesting to see whether Professor Maine," Sylvia thoughtfully interjected, "will accept Sane's offer of Faculty Advisorship. They can't function without a faculty overseer and somehow I have the feeling the middle of the road's going to become even more congested than ever when Dr. A. Maine returns his answer."

"We have to keep this matter alive," Vogel said almost crossly. "Or the squares win out again. Hell, from the letters we've been getting, student opinion is definitely concerned about the Bunch rap. It's been encouraging, you can't say it hasn't." He knew they were with him even though some of them didn't like to show it. "The Peace March may have been small, but it publicized what a lot of us felt."

"How to get to Washington. Go to Harvard, turn left."

The stale crack passed, for at this moment Carol Lester made her customary entry, preceded by a cascading copy of Burns and Peltason, *Government by the People*. With nods around she sat hastily down as far from Tommy Dehl as possible, pushing her spectacles back on the bridge of her nose, a task made more difficult than usual today since that organ was liberally bedaubed

with blemish cream—as Tommy himself immediately asked her, “Is that Noxzema or the new Vita, Carol? I’m interested in their advertising.”

“Why hallo, Tarmy!” she replied with forced hilarity. “Fancy meeting you here.”

“Why don’ you two get married?” Lewy was eying the sandwiches Carol had now broken out opposite her ex. (Jesus, had she shorn off the lashes of her left eye then?) “I mean, like is there someone else?”

“There *must* be,” Carol piped, and they laughed, and then were silent.

“A cheese lunch, huh?” Lewy was too broke today to afford food. “Blue cheese, huh?”

“It’s *going* blue.” Carol bit into the stale cafeteria whole-wheat and again they made laughter.

Ivan said, “Say, Carol, I hear your English prof wants to send something of yours in to a publisher.”

“It’s sort of like a novel. It’s terrible.” Her tiny eyes avoided the editor’s.

“But that’s wonderful. I certainly hope you get something out of it.”

“Mainly like money,” Lewy added, punching at the stuffed pockets of his Korean denims and O.D. jacket.

“Hey! Congratulations, Carol.” Sylvia leaned forward with genuine pleasure.

“I really think it’s terribly bad,” Carol mumbled, her eyes still averted.

But there was a warmth in their voices as they felicitated her. In a case like this they felt in it together. They had mostly all had it too hard themselves, one way or another, not to be happy when one of them got a break. The thing was to *end up ahead*.

“It means nothing, really,” Carol kept protesting, as she squeezed her face nearly to a laugh, her legs entwining agonizingly as she did so. They resumed their discussion. And Vogel

at once pressed forward his plan. *The Eagle* would play up the rumor concerning Bunch's dismissal in such a way that the national press would be forced to feature it.

"To CCMCE it's a scalp," he wound up. "But this time they may have gone too far. Despite the fix those marchers got in last summer, antinuclear demonstrations aren't illegal. Yet. And if they've overstepped their powers with Bunch, and get slapped down by the State Commissioner, then it's going to be extremely embarrassing for one member of our college community. I have a strong feeling the President won't let it happen, I mean."

A hush. Tommy Dehl broke it by saying sleepily, "I like not ye man who cometh back from Yisroël."

"Iv, you do so know something," said Sylvia Hantmann breathily.

Lewy Jantaneo humped himself into a bundle. "Listen, Iv. Okay. The role of the student paper may have bin to needle the autorities in the past, in the thirties, like. That's history. And what's also history, man, is that ever' so often the Prexy in power gets mad. He slings the staff out of school. Iv, I want for my Bachelor from Science degree yet."

Vogel laughed. "You'll get it, Lew. It's just that a fellow I know on the *Times* told me he had it on excellent authority that the President is going to run for Senate next year."

You could have heard a pin drop. Then universal scorn, a concoction of consternation, broke out at the information. Waynett Marsh threw out his arms in parodistic despondency, Tommy Dehl tried to hoist himself by his hair in a Dickensian gesture (and succeeded only in dislodging a knitted prayer cap), Lewy just collapsed, while even Carol Lester yipped her incredulous—"Whyyt!"

"How stinks the state of Denmark yet."

"Iv, don' make me laugh when my lips are chapped."

"We should play a Souza march maybe?"

"Most foul, oh most foul."

"Ministers of grace defend us!" agreed Sylvia Hantmann, when the uproar had subsided somewhat. "On what ticket, for mercy's sake?" Vogel expressed head-shaking ignorance.

"What it matter?" Waynett spoke with a broad grin.

It said something or other about the state of the union that all of them, instantaneously, took it for granted that if politics were involved, so also was some degree of graft or crooked dealing. The thing was axiomatically vile. With eyes sunk somewhat into his bony skull Ivan noted this. "If Bunch's expulsion backfires," he said, "our beloved Prez will be over a barrel. It'll lose him what little of the liberal vote he hopes to get and I do hear there are still some liberals left around in New York State." But he had something to do this evening, he knew, an appointment with Seymour Katzman, sometime Chairman of the English Department, and, just as soon as he could know they were all instinctively behind him, he wound up the agenda as rapidly as possible. There was only the matter of the pinups, well, outstanding.

"Since it seems we've got to go on with this nonsense, even if it's only a way of getting people to read the social action stuff, I do have to assign someone to pick up those glossies for Wednesday's issue. It's the last before Thanksgiving. Syl?" He butted inquisitorily toward her. She attracted him. But to prevent any misunderstanding, not to say subsequent accusations of favoritism, Ivan had made it a rule to send his girl reporters on this type assignment. He had tried Carol earlier but she was reportedly taking her script down to Williamson, McNeery, Inc. "Thanks a lot, Syl," he said as her pad came forward. "Evidently these particular shots are over in the Alpha Pi house. Guy called De Vayo took 'em."

"And I'm to contact him?"

"In a nice way," Lewy threw in.

"Oh no," said Sylvia. "I've met that young scholar. Or should I say, he's been following me around the campus for the last two weeks solid."

"We'll keep our legs crossed for you, Syl," encouraged pallid Tommy Dehl.

"You got him crawling up the wall," said another.

Finally she agreed to go, and the meeting broke up. Brooding Vogel boarded a bus.

Like every other Lincoln student using city transportation at this hour of day Ivan vainly tried to study. In order to equip himself for teaching in Israel—to which he most jealously aspired to return—he had been forced this semester to take an Education course—Ed. 145: *Workshop in Intergroup Relations*. He stared blindly at the wording of a textbook "application" now:

Sketch out two or three conclusion-drawing studies in preplanning criterial evaluations as factors in verbalized equivalence and their procedural use.

Some of these courses achieved a monotony close on grandeur. The so-called cafeteria curriculum. *Intermediate Vacuum Cleaning*. The pro-seminar on *Creative Checkers*.

Ivan glanced up. The buildings around him were hideous and a freak snow flurry had so far done nothing to soften their outlines. These tenements exuded misery, for the odor in Ivan's nostrils was of dust and urine, wood fires and untidy sheep.

Yes, another night was being lived in this guilty universe, far away, where his own heart was. A limitless darkness, a blackness like lepers in which hoarse dogs howled and later, through the bone-blazing day, men moved possessionless, with a nomad divinity. It was the stop. He got off.

Katzman lived in a typical New York professor's apartment, small, comfortable and overfurnished with genuflections to gentility such as wine-hued Bokhara carpets, much plush, gate-leg tables, Canton plates, epergnes, wardrobes of black walnut, and the rest of the bric-à-Braque characteristic of the interior décor to be found in the stone-dead novels of the just-plain-Bills chosen

by R. J. C.'s book club. Here Victoriana took on pretensions to stability.

Pictures framed too cheaply, hung too high—oh why can I never see a van Gogh reproduction (or even Kierkegaard at his high desk) without groaning now, thought Ivan Vogel as Katzman hustled him down the bowling alley of a corridor to his den, a smaller room tapestried with the teeth of his profession, rows and rows of board filing boxes.

These card indexes filled the room and were faintly terrifying. For this mild professor, engaged for over thirty years on his *Dictionary of Pennsylvania Dutch*, had amassed literally hundreds of thousands of entries, all neatly docketed, filed, and stacked to the peeling ceiling in apple-pie order, set for eventual editing when the day came for that enormous act of courage necessary for something in Seymour to cry out, *Now! stop!*

There was such a hint of madness in this method—surely only a lunatic or an American scholar could mass up all this material—that Vogel felt uneasy in his chair as Katzy (in student slang) fetched out Scotch. Ivan pressed his bony knees together hard, like a criminal awaiting interrogation, and indeed the police nature of this cell in the heart of the city was strongly enhanced by Katzman's hobby, a collection of rifles and old U.S. firearms that he had somehow squeezed in here.

"You've come to ask me if I know anything further about Orrin Bunch, I imagine?"

Vogel grinned. "How did you guess, sir?"

Carefully the ex-Chairman placed coasters under their glasses, then sat down himself against the only vacant wall, along which well-rubbed rifles bristled in a hedge. He proceeded to roll his own cigarette after first offering Ivan a paper.

"Well, I assure you I know nothing further about the case. And even if I did, I doubt whether I could properly tell you anything."

"Just so long as you don't inform me it's another 'tragedy of our times,' sir."

Katzman smiled at that. "And just so long as *The Eagle* don't try to read anti-Semitism into the matter again."

"I killed that. One of the girls on the paper. I rather like her. Well, frankly I think she needs a screw."

"*That* oughtn't to be too difficult to arrange at Lincoln, I'd say." Katzman laughed loudly, with an armed awkwardness, shooting out puffs from his crooked cylinder. "Half of CCMCE are Jewish. Actually Ashkenazim. Not that that means anything, as I'm sure you're aware."

"Well, sir, we've now checked on everything we can. Including all the examinations Professor Bunch set over the past ten years. But if the Council dismissed him for connection with the Washington March, then it'd seem to be thoroughly unconstitutional. Regardless of what they have or haven't got on those particular students who went to prison." The editor paused to drink. "Isn't it possible for the faculty to make some sort of concerted action about this thing?"

"Concerted action? Our faculty?" Katzman tweaked the pince-nez off his nose. "I don't know if you quite understand, my Ivan. It's all very well for you student liberals to ask for inflammatory action on our behalf. But at State and municipal colleges we have to live under existing laws. So we accept those laws when taking our jobs. Else why accept them? Remember your Socrates. I don't believe you drive on the left-hand side of our highways here, do you?"

"We simply want someone to show concern over the matter. At present, no one does."

"As you know, I put in my two cents' worth. It wasn't much, but resigning the chair seemed the only protest I could make."

"And I'd like you to know we think you're to be warmly congratulated on that decision, sir. We've definitely said so in the paper."

"Yes. I rather wish you wouldn't. Any more, I mean. Let me replenish your potion, Ivan. Now. Have you read H.R. 13247, the National Defense Education Act, which was signed into law

not long ago as 'an emergency undertaking'? No? Well, you should, especially before trying to play up this affair any further. Title X of this Act, which affects or will affect every college of any consequence across the country, private or public, receiving any form of government funds, is the loyalty pledge. Basically, it's an extension of the oath required by the State of New York. What I mean is that here you simply see an extension of requirements that being an American, being a member of a superstate, is going more and more to have to include today."

"*Why?* Everyone knows the futility of oath requirements as screening devices." The editor's tone was grumbling; he found it hard to communicate with this man of steel. "Of course, I agree it's difficult for you, sir."

With a twitch Katzman straightened an old-fashioned Spencer repeater. "What else can we do? The man himself doesn't know, I don't believe. I myself was only informed of the suspension after it had taken place. And on a routine city form with 'Conduct Unbecoming' checked off." Shaking his head Katzman began to roll another cigarette with mercurial expertise. "It might be anything, Ivan."

Vogel offered his next suggestion with carpeted eyes—"There is one way of effecting entrance into Professor Bunch's home, sir. The Supreme Court has held that local Health Inspectors may now enter a private dwelling without warrant. In order to search for insanitary conditions, I mean."

"And Dr. Bunch was incredibly sanitary," commented Katzman, who had listened violently to this suggestion. "No, no, I doubt if he falls below *minimum community standards* in a manner that might make such search legal or even quasi-legal. Evidently the door isn't even being opened to delivery men."

"I know, sir. I drove past his house last week, and all the blinds were down."

"He may not even be there." Katzman skewed his chair. "I fear the day of the social martyr is over, Ivan. We are all too content."

"A tragedy of our times." The editor rose to his feet. "Thank you again, sir, for your time. But before I leave, may I ask you one thing?"

"Charge ahead."

"What's your opinion of the manner in which the English Department's presently being run?"

"To my mind it has a pleasant element of low comedy, Ivan."

"May I quote you to that effect, sir?"

"No. You mayn't."

"Right. I won't."

"I know you won't."

"One last thing. There's a college rumor going the rounds that the President's intending to run for Senator."

To the editor's surprise the ex-Chairman nodded affably: "So I heard. I was in the library this noon. The staff there know of most things before they happen. Though to tell the truth," he jovially added, "the President has always denied the idea so vigorously in the past I had long assumed he would run one day."

Chatting by stages Katzman saw the young man to the door and then, without going in to his wife who was knitting a towel in aid of the Vivisection Investigation League and listening to "The Last Word" from CBS, he returned to his lair.

Seymour Katzman knew and liked the loyal, if probably apostate, Jew who had just visited with him. All the faculty respected Ivan, in fact, and only yesterday, over luncheon in the cafeteria, the editor's name had arisen during conversation with an Astronomy teacher. This rachitic professor had confided in Seymour that Ivan had completed Advanced Astronomy 37 in his freshman year, a feat so seldom accomplished that, when the course was over, he had been selected as one of seven students to be taken aside, ushered into the Departmental office, and told that really the sun did go round the earth. That happened to the merest elite at Lincoln, a still more select band being informed that for all *practical* purposes the earth was square. The story

was typical of the high regard in which his teachers held the editor, and Katzman shared in such.

Under the shadow of his firearms he now sat down to perfect another kind of weapon. He had not been Chairman of a large Department at a city college for nothing and not all the boxes surrounding him contained cards for his dictionary, by any means. In one group, supplied with dummy fronts, was a dossier on every member of the staff who might in any manner be inimical to him. Of all people, he was thinking, Orrin Bunch! Amazing!

Katzman had commenced this record when first assuming Chairmanship of his corrupted empire and inheriting the network of informers built up by his predecessor (who had died of a stroke on a tennis court), as well as important contacts in the library. Soon he had known even more than the latter; he knew exactly which member of his Department was having a libel action against another, how much so-and-so was in debt to such-and-such a loan association, which steady professor, decades ago by now, had once passed a dud check in college, whose tax account was annually audited (R. J. C.'s practically monthly), which member was secretly hooked, which homosexual, whose passport had been refused, and whose mail was under Post Office surveillance (together with, through Christmas mailmen in his classes, the reason why), so on, so forth. It was a very complete affair altogether and compiled with characteristic cross-references. He was also by this time thoroughly familiar with all the ruses by means of which city officialdom could strike at an employee, and never filled in even the most perfunctory form without taking off a personal photocopy; the Vita sheets, for example, sent round for completion annually from sundry Deans, could so easily be utilized for perjury suits whenever the city desired. After a certain age one tended to forget the exact years of all one's associations and employments and degrees, and most professors filled in these blanks with hasty irritation. Not so Seymour. He was perfectly aware, too, of the Supreme Court decision concerning the right to entry of which Ivan Vogel had just informed him—a right

allowed the *field-check* Inspectors of the Internal Revenue Service also—and he was entirely ready, at any time of night or day, for the strange face above the business suit in his own hallway, together with the flashed badge thereafter. It was all a bit like the Smolensk archives and it would presumably always be the same, to some degree, in any city office anywhere.

Little by little odd additions had tumbled into Seymour's palms to swell out this plodding *inventio* most satisfactorily—Dean Grudin had consulted him about his wife's fowling-piece suicide, for instance, and Katzman had been happy to demonstrate how she must have pulled the trigger with her toe; he knew now that Elmer Pin, Dean of Parking, was currently undergoing his third, and Adlerian, analysis, while another member of the Administration, on the cafeteria staff to be exact, was a Reich devotee and read regularly (what reading, too!) for the Orgone Institute Press. In short, he had found himself in charge, like any scholar, of the sheer perfection of detail. As the years rolled by he'd noticed, moreover, his malice growing alongside his intellect, he couldn't seem to help it, it was part of the mystery. Writers and teachers were a *genus irritable vatum*, men meditating revenges and slaughters and mind-grieving evils under the academic arches, all this generally stingless hiss compensating for their physical deficiencies.

So by this time Katzman *knew his man*. He knew that everyone, without exception, had his weak spot to be exploited when the limp time came. The odd thing was that Orrin Bunch had always seemed the exception. A man of iron. There were only four cards on Orrin in all this queer collection, and they all related to sporting activities at the Y. Katzman gave a shudder. Only too frankly he acknowledged his own Achilles' heel, a daughter he doted on rooming at Sarah Lawrence with the erratic natural offspring of a racketeer and at present being dated by a rigidly Amish sophomore from the University of Pennsylvania. Seymour had given his one girl the correctly Caucasian name of Avery; it would go well with the kind of second name her parents hoped for her.

The ex-Chairman's eyes drew in at such reflections, there were certain things one simply couldn't sufficiently protect oneself against. He had considered his dear girl's position from every possible angle and cursed himself for ever contacting her beau's father in the interests of lexicography. Moreover, what sent his stomach writhing nights now was the realization, all too late, that he had acted *on impulse* in resigning the Chair over Orrin. It was how he had felt—and to act on how you felt in city employ was unforgivable. In the past month alone Katzman had had notarized no less than four different letters to the FBI on guard against attack over the Bunch business. He knew the importance of getting an accusation in first. And he knew, too, now that New York City had set up its Board of Ethics for municipal employees, of the actual vulnerability of CCMCE itself. For now the very members of this august Council came under Section 898.1-0 of the Code of Ethics, recently added to Section 897.1-0 in Section 1, Chapter 40 of the Administrative Code of the City of New York, which in part read:

Conflicts of interest—No Councilman or other officer or employee, whether paid or unpaid, shall engage in any business or transaction or shall have a financial or other private interest, which is in conflict with the proper discharge of his official duties.

One member of the Council at least had just published a book and was almost certainly receiving royalties on it: if (and when) need be, this could easily be construed a time-consuming "business or transaction." Another had been divorced, and Katzman intended to look further into that case, too.

Thus, the patient light playing on a green celluloid shield over prim pince-nez, Katzman crouched at his desk, checking a colleague's last publication for possible plagiarism with antlike fastidiousness. And as he worked, he wondered again how Orrin, iron Orrin, had ever let himself be caught. Why, that man knew the

city regulations backwards, his mind was an adding machine. He had seemed impregnable, a model of self-control Katzman himself had often envied.

Actually there was not at this moment too much malice in Katzman's own mentality. It was just that behind the hunched figure lay close on forty years of service to the city, during each of which compulsory deductions to the pension plan had been made from his salary. Considerable deductions, too. The dictionary could wait. In any case he was a Full Professor now, could rise no higher in the ranks. Not that publication helped you at Lincoln anyway. Promotion was based on salary levels. However competent and deserving, however assisted by UFT, few members of the faculty could jump the increment stages by a sudden rise—not with the city budget what it was. To do so could well cause a public inquiry, with a subsequent presentment to a General Sessions Judge.

Still, Katzman didn't intend, in the twilight of a long and tough career, to lose all those hard-earned savings on account of "conduct unbecoming" by order of a Kafka-like Council. Not without some semblance of a fight, at least. Not without taking approximately two-thirds of the Department down with him if he went. Would Orrin make such a struggle? Had he the apparatus? Oh, what had been the chink in that efficient shell? So Katzman worked away, under his terrible arsenal.

Meanwhile, Katzman's abandoned Department taught on. For the first weeks after the election its muddied waters rolled smoothly. As smoothly as ever they did within the madhouse of Muche Lincoln. The truth was that almost anything was preferable to the tension preceding Mesrob's victory and everyone heaved a sigh, metaphorically holding breath till Thanksgiving and then Christmas breaks. Or so they hoped. Their temporary truce was "signalized," in local parlance, by the purchase out of funds of a new Department cat, called Julia, who proceeded to

filthy the typists' desks in no time at all. At first seldom seen outside his sanctum, Mesrob merely began sending out, and having posted up, a succession of directives in a contorted preterite.

Item. Anyone requiring headed stationery *put* a written requisition in triplicate to Miss Wilmer.

Item. Any member failing to meet a class *reported* the matter instantly to the Chair.

These surely playful new-broom tactics, to which *The Eagle* editor had passingly referred, were taken on a light level for the nonce, and created no more than a ripple of jocularity in the ranks. November was still sweetened by the cream of the previous month's payday, an afternoon when denimed plumbers and "sanitation engineers" (garbage-disposal men) stood in line with snowy-polled Professors Emeriti at the check trough, where indeed the workmen were always given smiling priority by the Baptists behind the Bursar's grille. For at Lincoln everyone, even the President, had democratically to collect his own check, else it vanished for years into the maw of city offices dealing with deceased hospital help. As a result, retired professors tended to settle within walking distance of the Bursar's office, against their more doddery days. So until they died they could contentedly collect their pensions. Then make a dash to the nearest bank. Where they could be seen in another line, heads cocked, spruce as fiddles, proud to have *made it* for yet another month.

A test alert was being sent out by the special Conelrad stations as Axel Maine made his active way to Salem Hall, a copy of eight Greek tragedies edited and (sort of) translated by some powerhouse in the Midwest tucked under his arm. Crossing the back of the campus, where prodigious trucks perpetually unloaded oil, he saw the Lincoln architecture or lack of it as standing staggered at the end of day, mute, defeated by excessive occupancy, and throbbing with a cautious fatigue. He thought of Orrin Bunch with a tensing of his stomach and tried unsuccessfully to laugh—Well out of it, Nuncle! A large car, ostentatiously from the Chem Eng Department, nearly ran him down as he hustled on.

Four days ago a small student, obvious emissary of the Frustration and Acne set, nursing what might have been an ROTC bayonet wound on his nose, had asked Axel for a moment, please. Would Dr. Maine do them a favor and act as Faculty Advisor to Students for a Sane Nuclear Policy?

Making his way up to the high room now, passing classes where odd shoe salesmen (several unshaven) addressed their ranks of peopled retorts, Axel heard again his own horrified "Me?" He had meant it. It was not only the growing suspicion that CCMCE considered Sane subversive, and had shot poor Orrin out for an alleged okay of that Washington March. It was the General. By God, if there was one thing Beth's father believed in, it was dropping bombs. "The world is run on fear, m'boy." Anything else was "sentimental-liberal stuff." Curiously close to Ned Meilberg's position, Axel often reflected.

"This couldn't be an awkwarder moment," he had fended the boy off with. "Give me a few days to think it over, would you?"

Those few days were all but up. Not with a bang, but a whimper indeed. Axel quickened his step. Why had they asked him? How did they know? These were anxious questions, indeed. Did CCMCE know? Was it the library perhaps? For he had just put back a large volume containing a series of letters from a Japanese wife who had watched her husband disintegrate and die after the Hiroshima bombing. Axel had read this with his hair rising. He believed he had marked certain passages. It had seemed intolerable to him to be sitting in a comfortable room, beside a wife like a pet. With the gas-chamber stories there had been books like the Anne Frank diary, the *Tanguy* document, the Salvesen and Vaillant and Churchill women's accounts, and many others to make that huge inhumanity personal and present. The Hiroshima case had been a cosmic disaster too vast to grasp. Until he had read these letters. He felt more than uneasy—deeply guilty at not having participated himself, and momentarily aware that it would be impossible to complain of anything in life again. Beside these heart-sickening epistles the effort of anyone, how-

ever small, to arrest a movement toward universal destruction assumed a certain nobility. *Monstrous* if Orrin Bunch had really been suspended for acting as Advisor to Sane—just because the government wanted to set off more bombs. Just because the Peace Marchers had been put in jail. Yes, someone, somewhere, had found out Axel's secret, surely. For he believed passionately in *not* befouling the atmosphere, and in *not* blowing up the world.

Overhead a bell jangled so jarringly it seemed to haul at the scut of his nape. He ducked at the sound—a sort of jeer. Intro to Lit again. Great Jehoshophat, what did World War II, the most potent experience in his and Hoyd's lives, mean to the fifty inhabitants of Salem 911 now awaiting his arrival? Oh, a *soapy* expression crossed their faces when Pearl Harbor was mentioned, but their written expositions of destructive mechanical processes were childishly innocent of any philosophy behind the application. As for violence, why, only a week ago Axel had read aloud the conclusion to the *Phaedo*, where the jailer pinches Socrates' limbs and feels those hackneyed shinbones turning cold, a moment that had stirred him profoundly as a kid. (He'd felt his own legs for weeks thereafter.) To them it meant nothing. This was a quiet death. At least four members of that class had had relatives perish in gas ovens. Several others had already been involved in messy auto accidents. All had been born after Pearl Harbor. F.D.R. was History, a dim memory indeed.

Entering the room, he instantly noted the rhythmic motion of her flamingo limbs. Under her spectacles, Sylvia Hantmann's little *air agnès* seemed even more pronounced today. How she both infuriated and yet attracted him. The bluestocking! A scrawl on the blackboard read, MARGE IT'S AT 1200. He erased it, slapped down his text. Several students were already asleep, one snorer being nudged. The perfume of the class Kim Novak (oh Dupont heights in front!) was as usual making it hard to breathe. Then, as the last of the latecomers dug out his prayer cap, Axel started shouting. He would have to do so for an hour—Sophocles, Shakespeare, Shelley—for the subway surfaced by Salem (if only it

were the New Haven and Hartford, he wisecracked to his colleagues), and bus drivers liked to park, and shout, and spit nearby, while at moments of particular pathos in his reading a jet would thunder overhead, a pneumatic drill commence below, brakes would screech, an ambulance holler by. Halfway through this evening's period a siren lowed in practice warning of some sort for several minutes and Axel was compelled to break off utterly. Miss Carshialita Heldsohn lit a cigar. Mr. Tunc Glatzger, the two-bit Parsifal of the course, stared out a side wall with attenuated derision, while from a forward pew perfumed Coreen Lanz mascaraed her lashes and offered her instructor an alluring glimpse of nylon thigh, in support of an A for her midterm, still all too lamentably uncorrected. For them, for them? Was he to risk his whole career for these imminent apaches?

When the noise was over a boy looked up from a copy of *Men's WILDCAT Adventures* and asked a question about *The Odyssey* pronounced, and by him doubtless to be spelt, theodicy. Then lethargy reigned again. Axel could feel himself working up into a clutch. Somehow they were all in the underground together, all these imperfect, disfigured specimens whom he could not keep from loving. And it continued to be the kind of class so inert the only possible way to waken it was pose as an anarchist, or analyze *Trees*. But by now most of these old soldiers had grown too cautious to be aroused even by those techniques. There were moments in these "experimental thinking laboratories" when Axel's fingers itched for those slippers and strops of another youth, in the bad old days of law and order. Something was bursting in his breast, some capacity, he wanted desperately to touch a boy's bony, anxious nose.

For a few moments more he strove to hold their interest, perspiring hard and making dashes this way and that. Then he halted. He had to *think*. Students for Sane. Dropping bombs. Sylvia Hantmann's leggy legs. (Today gilt sandals redeemed her feet, subsumed the stoic antiquity of a face straight out of the Old Testament, and those features that struck out, by structure alone,

against the triviality of the New York average, and the idiot regularity of the star.) Hold it now!

He set a test. A *pop quiz*, as aggrieved Mr. Zbigniew Schmidler bent forward unbelievingly to declare. (And Ossi Analyuk was heard to groan, "You can't *do* this to us, Professor.") It was all such a muddle. Axel strode up and down. Beth. That place they'd seen near Darien. Possible. The bomb. Bunch. He'd never. Yes, the quiz was to get peace, as also, he acknowledged opening his texts, to help him prepare the following day's continuous classes too. And as he glanced up to see them reeling and writhing under the onset of ideas he asked himself the question once again—Is it worth it?

In most Lincoln classes there was a spattering of ex-peasant girls, damsels with stiff flesh and livid faces who might well have (as many had) come straight from some Central European farm-yard. Watching them biting their pencils, Axel could not help but find these reminders of that older, agrarian world he had once glimpsed touchingly genuine. Of course, they would lose their simplicity in a year. Miss Trifly Reinowitz over there, for instance, or Diane Herz, L.Sr.5, in her lampshade frills. Miss Anahid Zlokovitz was a walking ad for Klein's. Having no money, and little else to offer in the marriage mart, the Lincoln lass tended to cultivate her sexuality with the care a hothouse horticulturist expended on his favorite flower. And even that accent they picked up in the Bronx, like a stevedore with a crate on his foot forcing a pip up a straw, still couldn't kill their appeal. Once more his eyes sidled to the side, where Sylvia sat, bespectacled, unconscious, all elongated head and hair like so much ash you could blow off in a puff. There were times when Axel felt confused by such alien strength. The precisely inclined attitude of Tonio Kröger's head came into his mind. Mann the incomparable master. Should he or shouldn't he? Another involuntary onrush choked his chest.

For if a man as armored as Bunch had been sent packing for advising Sane, then he, Assistant Professor Axel Maine, wasn't

likely to fare much better. Jesus, to accept such a thing would be tantamount to putting his head inside an unfriendly lion's mouth. Christ alive, how could he even consider it? To be fired from Lincoln on the verge of getting out of the city, the taint of being "controversial," never to be able to land a job anywhere which. . . .

"Five more minutes," he barked shrewdly.

They began handing in. They wanted away. Bless them, bless them, said his contradictory heart. And collecting their scrawls as they thudded out, Axel reflected on the election of Mesrob. Oh, the whole thing was so crazy, those struggles of the Department's Guelfs and Ghibellines interested him less and less. Even the younger men had it, that professional endemic or flaw, like silicosis for miners—somehow he'd known from the start that night they'd never agree on any common candidate. To see so many points of view was simply weakening today. As Camus had said, in a world dominated by history toleration remained the greatest crime. And now, by Christ, here was the President rumored to be running for Senate. On his own two legs.

"Doctor Maine?"

That emphasis again. Axel stood up. Vaguely trying to avoid seeing her liquid limbs and flowing hair, avoiding, above all, those haunting, gradual eyes, he was aware in the classroom's colossal caloricity that the last of the students had pushed off, their principal exercise over Thanksgiving to be switching channels on TV. He amassed his books and closed his case. What he had been thinking of was the agony awaiting him at home of having to give a blind Korean war veteran a D for his paper on *The Love Song of Arthur Prufrock* (by Browning) done in English Three.

"Yes, Miss Hantmann?"

"It's not about the course." She said it scornfully, as if she meant—I can ace that any time, heavens, I'm not *that* out-to-lunch. "No, it's just something the paper would be interested in having."

"Go ahead."

She paused, half-smiling. He noticed she was smoking (rather too hard) a fluttering Balkan Sobranie and carrying (rather too obviously exposed) a paperback *Horace—Glasguae: In Aedibus*. "We'd like to know, are you accepting the advisorship of Sane?" The full lips ominously curled. "Or shall we say you'd *rather not*?"

"My dear young lady," Axel began, leaning forward and breathing fast, "do you mean to say you didn't know? Surely by now *The Eagle* is aware I have an atomic reactor in my office and that aside from an inability to see, which always afflicts me after grading a few of your papers, I haven't as yet suffered any ill effects. You might call it a 'clean' instrument, I think." They were at the door. "You may print I have accepted the advisorship, Miss Hantmann."

He faced her then. Did he imagine it or did those carefully pale lips tremble? She seemed about to cry. Yes, there was a writhing at the edges, a tear coursed down one scalding cheek. She really was irresistible. Such eyes. A gentle face, dripping with spit. Pouch-eyed Henry IV, he ducked his head and strode suddenly off. Off, down, out. Out past a girl sleeping by a lino machine, past the first of the holiday's scatological cleaning men, past the barrack-like labs where transistors bleated as the boys fractured their atoms, past the tense youths who always seemed happier studying in telephone booths or on stairways, out onto the campus, so-called.

For a second Axel stood there as if baffled by the wind. His heart was beating fast. Unsought, the reckoning convulsed his flesh. He had done it, he was glad. By God, it *was* worth it. The general affection he had felt in the classroom came rushing back. Lincoln was no basketball school for the average Joe. There was a purpose, a communication. He stood there teetering, rocking on the balls of his feet, happy in a way he had not been for years, perhaps not since the war when values had stood out clear as a kid's comic book. He knew where to seek out the Sane student leader, with his bootlace lapels and Late-Late-Show eyes.

First, however, he needed a drink. Beth had so badgered the Volks the poor beetle was no longer cornering like a puppy coming up the cellar stairs, and was in for repairs of some nature. It seemed suddenly cold. Opposite the West Gate was a bar called El Colosal, a sinister stable hung with machetes and furnished with phony ferns and a pair of pool tables. Axel got his little legs into motion and made for it fast. Let them fire me if they want to, he muttered angrily, half-aloud, as he debated whether this evening he could hold his Martinis down to four.

Eddie Drosa felt pleased. And with good reason. Three days free from the sweat-mill of Calculus, added to which was the fact that Golda Jean had come to town.

"I'm off, Ma."

"That's nice." His mother settled back to her Russian novel.

"Bye, Illy."

A gurgle in reply. Standing by a bed that perpetually appeared to have run into a storm, and clad only in panties, his graduating High School sister was preparing for her own night on the town with Sweet-Swig mouthwash. She stamped a leg at him to shut the door. Illona was growing. Maybe she could win the Can Comp yet. *Over his dead body.*

"Bye, Dad. Thanks for the transportation. Loan of."

The liberated lab boy left. New York City had given him one of its perfect evenings. Lobbed into the sky a technicolor moon fairly asked to have hunks grabbed off it, as it sailed serenely by. A breeze nice up from the river and the Ford purring like a baby for once. He was even making the lights on Amsterdam tonight. He clicked on the radio: "*... only three-two more to Saint Nick, folks, and this is your friendly . . .*"

In the raised distance the city beckoned jeweled fingers. "*... from the TNTC newsroom, Ham. . . .*" Eddie always liked the look of that cluster from where he was. Like being at the start of a race. Or maybe stretched out at the feet of a woman. He dug at the brake, thinking of Golda Jean's slow curves. "*. . . and*

that leaves a key post . . . right here in town . . . with Lincoln's hard-hitting President running in next fall's . . . but say, folks, what do you know about the moon?" Eddie glanced up at it. Pure. Now he could see her place, the apartment house on the Drive where she was staying. Doorman, huh. *"That final thrust needed to resist the inertia which the velocities of the nebula gravitational . . . what I mean is, folks, WILL SEMELE REACH THE MOON?"* Eddie parked curtly and went in. Plush. Thirty-third floor. Third to the right. He was in luck. All three's tonight. That's nice. He rang.

A terrifically tall girl answered. With cool inquiry, followed by growing amazement, she studied Eddie's sixty-buck hopsack, textured till it looked like iridescent chocolate biscuit, then gazed with awe at his Lord Fanshawe tie, and then she smiled. "Mr. Drosa? Jeany'll be out in a minute. She's in the loo right now."

A spindly miss in baggy tweeds and too big shoes, she chatted with Eddie in a slanguage he didn't understand and then excused herself. A has-been rather than a been-had, he figured with inexplicable irritation, when she'd gone. The kind that looked the same coming or going. He buried himself in the latest *Business Week*.

When Golda Jean came through like a vision of *joie de vivre* he stood up, feeling frightened. "Hey, it's good to see you again."

"Eddie!" Unerringly gracious, the recognizable American dream directed her hand toward him, a blemishless challenge to manhood. "You look different."

"Do I?"

With an ingenuous flutter she radiantly subsided—rather than sat—on the very edge of a pouffe, hugging herself as if with sheer love of being *her*.

"What are we going to do tonight? I mean, you *do* have your flivver?"

"Huh?" He frowned. It was her who had changed. She. And how. As he followed out to the toc-toc of her silver shoes, he

watched the straight tremoring shoulders, under their pastel gauze. "How 'bout we take in a concert?"

"Me?" In front of the elevator she swung, tossing a laugh bright with careless surprise. "Now how did you know that's just what I wanted to do tonight." She rolled her eyes, tapped a toe, and started humming. Then, as if roguishly, she added, "New York has the *finest* concerts."

On the way down Eddie smooched her a little.

"Edward, please," she begged. "*Please.*"

"That's a nice blouse," he tried, still caressing the major rhomboideus of her back. "Aren't they?"

Golda Jean feigned not to understand. "You like it?" She made a little frown, shivering from his touch; and then as she clicked regally out of the elevator she murmured to herself, though with sharp drama all the same, "Well, *really.*"

Still, she scampered kittenishly toward the convertible, swinging in to a froth of frills. They coasted crosstown. Now the tension between them seemed to subside and Eddie's hopes rose high as they small-talked their doings since they'd last seen each other. She told him about her kid brother (Skip) and her sister (Sal) and he, in turn, told her about Illona enrolling at Lincoln next term. "Another engineering student," he said with apology and when he stole his arm round the back of her seat she definitely pretended not to notice. He even went on to offer his theory that sex played the major role in marriage (backing it with something that Fleisch professor had said about Joyce) and she returned no more than a thoughtful, "Hm?"

A minute later, eyes twinkling, she cried: "We read about that crazy competition you're having. My!"

"Y'mean, Miss Superior Posterior?"

"*I'll* say. There was a thing in *Time*. My goodness."

"Well, one of the girls is now accusing another of cheating."

"No." She was looking winsomely out the window and suddenly she gave a musical squeal. Floorboarding the brake, Eddie all but hit an Olds.

“What’s wrong?”

She was sitting straight, one scandalously tinted fingernail butting at her lip. “My gloves.”

“What about ‘em?”

“I’ve left my gloves.”

“Aw, forget it, Jeanie.”

“But—they—were—*Roman*—gloves,” she wailed.

“It don’t matter. You don’t need gloves wit’ me.”

He was adamant, driving on to her “You wouldn’t understand,” and soon he began describing the concert he was taking her to: with Brubeck, Shearing and Garner all on one bill the place would really swing. She grew ever more thoughtful.

“Edward?” she asked, as they waited on a light. A tearful sigh.

“Huh?”

She screwed prettily on the seat, in budding sheen of taffeta and lace, prototypical perfection of promise huddling a little, the daring nested bird—“May I ask you something? Would you mind very much, I mean?”

“What’s eatin’ you, Golda?”

It transpired she had imagined the suggested concert to be of classical music yet. After this piteous outburst, she made her own desires more plain—a compromise! Could they maybe go to some avant-garde movies she had read about in the *Village*? Eddie groaned. To him, as to most Lincoln students, the *Village* was pretty much a mess of hung-up phonies. Cursing Wisconsin under his breath, he swung the Ford downtown. She sighed, and snuggled in her seat, until at her authoritative “Hey!” he realized he’d been driving fast as an Arab trapped in Delancey Street.

They sat through a series of shorts in an old union hall, with happy-worker murals and lots of folkniks. To Eddie the whole thing was indescribably dismal and he yawned misanthropically, twice changing their seats in an effort to keep awake. Even Golda Jean’s presence didn’t help. She was rapt, radiant, limp with laughter at roller-skating in Peru, biting her lips at the docu-

mentary of a revolting tree surgeon, hand on breast with wonder over a sequence showing snow figurines. Art. Only once did Eddie perk up at all. It was an item announced as THE NUDE BY "IRMA"; yet this turned out to be so incompetently lit, and hopelessly cut, the screen simply consisted of scorbatic scribblings for fifteen minutes on end. Moreover, Golda's well-nigh panicky embarrassment made concentration hard. It was unfortunate that at this moment he again put an arm about her. It was meant to be reassuring but chaste Jean twisted away. Eddie began to think of the concert they might have been at. He reflected that she had got thinner and, as Satchmo himself had said, *the bigger the figure, the more you can love.*

"I could do better'n this with my home Rollei," he said, after they'd watched a psycho case aged eighteen drifting round a Paris apartment for ten minutes or so. "Let's cut out."

This darling girl touched at her hair. Reproof? Withdrawal? Nonunderstanding maybe? Eddie felt increasingly uncomfortable. He looked back at the screen. Nary a bubble-gum subtitle to help out, either. Not only was the photography incredibly bad, the whole Francophilism was so fey, and frightful, and kind of diseased anyhow. A second childhood in celluloid yet. He pressed Golda Jean's third dorsal through the stretched gauze making, as he did so, some preliminary adjustments with two pink-pearl buttons there. Now she *snatched* from his touch, as if unearthing a reptile beside her.

"Edward! *Please!*" Then with a kind of maternal amazement she added, "I mean, I hope you're not in the *habit*. . . ."

Eddie gave up. Leaving the theater he bumped into a coed he knew.

"Who was that?" Golda Jean was all nonchalant curiosity.

"Jus' a girl I sleep with every now an' then."

"Whaat!"

"In my English class."

"Oh."

Into the car again she slipped with a rustle of glistening stock-

ings that reminded Eddie of the counting of millions of dollar bills.

“What say we eat?”

He took her to a Howard Johnson's, avoiding the more costly niteries nearby. She seemed to retreat into her gossamer shell more and more. Once she asked wistfully, “Eddie. Do you like Dylan Thomas?”

“Uh?”

“Dyl-an Thomas.” Her head went up with haughty challenge.

“Where they playing?”

“He *read* at Wisconsin.” She looked away.

“Yeah? What?” Eddie was all at sea. Golda Jean was differing with him on subject after subject, including, now, the resurrected and all-imported role of sex in marriage. “Like to dance?” he asked.

“I don't think I care to.”

There seemed nothing to do but take her home. In the convertible she sat smiling, fingering the lace at her chest as the Ford forged ahead. When he put his right arm round her she again affected not to notice but, humming abstractedly, she leaned forward in a charming movement to turn on the radio—“*exclusive reporter . . . right there at the. . .*” Golda Jean gave a matter-of-fact pat to her blouse-in-front, the wind touched her burning breast. “*You'll actually go into the control room with Abe, hear the rocket signal and. . .*”

Eddie let the car surge to an intersection. “Sure you wouldn't like to take in a supper club?” he asked valiantly.

“Not tonight, Edward.” A flutter of the dying swan, and they were back at her block. Something had gone wrong? Yeah, but what?

“Hey.” He reached and caught her as she pantherlike poised, one hand on the door. “Listen. Let's make the scene, what say, Golda Jean?”

Her mouth made a line. There was such a sigh of her lovely bosom, then she'd gone. Jesus, he thought, driving angrily north,

it wasn't as if I said anything *wrong*. I didn't mean run the bed a'ready, did I? To hell with her! He glanced at his watch. The night was young. He reached to the hot-and-cold-running dashboard: ". . . even plans interview with the two chippies themselves. Yin and Yang. The first animals to make the moon. Boston witches not included. So be there at the blast-off with TNTC. And talking of blasting off, now's the time. . . ."

Cornering wickedly, Eddie cursed the wasted night, the shot dollars. He hadn't even got to find out how they performed sofa duty in Wisconsin yet. He rolled the dial as he drove, scrambling the programs into one another.

" . . . and NEXT year a man on the sun! The Russians promise—"

" . . . delicious chocolate-dipped coconut, simply smoothed in to the—"

" . . . dry lusterless hair. Why not wash it in—"

" . . . BLITE! The new calorie-less cola. Blite is right, for—"

" . . . any party at all. Your duty as a citizen is to—"

" . . . TURN YOUR ARMPITS INTO CHARMPITS!"

Eddie pushed his stubby legs into the pedals. Once a schmuck, always a schmuck. And did he give a damn? He was still surviving. From behind the shiny wheel Eddie Drosa grinned at the world.

Hoyd Rushzak tipped his chair and contemplated the seventy-two blue books heaped ahead of him with the semi-incredulous respect of Keats's Cortez. Of Keat's Cortez. He had spent Thanksgiving correcting millions of papers and preparing Grebanier. From time to time he had limped around the apartment doing odd jobs for Marlene, mostly consisting of cleaning up after the kids.

He was glad not to be going to Lincoln for at least a few days. There were moments when the whole place seemed just a hopeless mistake. Daily now Hoyd was becoming more conscious that somewhere, far from this world of bureaucratic compromise into which they were rushing their students, another hung suspended.

At the heaven's japanned edges the storm clouds could be seen. Were all their deadly virtues to be forced upon them by our impudent crimes? He wanted his own children to grow up into individuals, not into carbon copies of the city fathers. He was glad he had taken that girl Carol Lester's novel down to Williamson, McNeery. He hoped she succeeded where his textbook had failed. Maybe life had a chance for *her*.

There was, indeed, a "wild surmise" in Hoyd's tired eye as he contemplated the wreck of the midterm he had so irrelevantly administered to his class in Intro to Lit. By now he had been introduced to Colderidge, to Mathew Arnold, to *The Scofflaws* (by Bates), to Harry Perce, Sr. (or the Earl of Northumberland), as to Marvil's sonette in which "Worms get you in end." Cordiella was the heroin of the rebels in *King Lair* by someone variously spelt as Shacksphere, Shaksper, and Schakespheare (the creator of the last syndrome clearly taking no chances). Then there was Shelly's "Ode in the Limitations of Immortality" ("Avarice is the route of all evil"), and so on and so forth.

Hoyd opened an engineering tome one of this class had left behind before the break, and which he had duly collected for the boy. "If in Fig. 18-6 Z_1 is grid input capacitance, Z_2 is the plate output capacitance, and Z_3 is a crystal." And I'm a space monkey, thought Hoyd, reflecting that those who talked about the communication dilemma hadn't seen Lincoln textbooks yet. The lad's marker was the folded front page of the last issue of *The Eagle*. As usual now, this was almost wholly given over to the statuesque sulcus of an extremely succulent contender in the, ahem, the Beauty Contest. This bounding Backfisch had her taffy pelt stuffed somehow into hippy *corde du roi* and lightly smiling Hoyd paused to identify that positively Abyssinian embonpoint, which would have stopped the average express — "The Girl We'd Most Like to Think with—FITZGERALDINE SULLIVAN. A Seat Repeat."

So it certainly was, he considered, studying that separated sit-upon. "By Special Request" *The Eagle* had featured pix of

Fitz's Sitz for days on end, the coed in question evidently complaining of some technical unfairness on the part of another well-endowed contender. The present photo showed Miss Fitz (in cruelly towny attire) striving to squeeze into a two-seater plane at Amityville Airport while a begoggled member of Richtofen's Flying Circus stood anxiously by. This latter was an upper soph named Richie Weiss, it seemed, and the pair had enjoyed a satisfactory flight.

Beyond this what had he to read? Ah, of course. Roman Gladberg's new offprint, this time from *The Addison Journal*. After that Hoyd could postpone no longer "My Summer Job," on the part of a very large class of English 2 indeed. What would it be? Forging I.D. cards in the Catskills? Baking pragels on Thirty-second Street? Who hit his head, who struck his skill? *Oi weh!* The trouble was that Hoyd was worried, he couldn't concentrate, tonight was the first in a week he hadn't consulted his presently most obsessive piece of reading. This was a clip from the *Mirror*, hidden in his desk; he extracted it furtively now.

The Radiant Scarf. There it was. No doubt about it. Had he been *that* drunk? Sucking his pipe, unsteaming his glasses, Hoyd mulled: impossible, it simply couldn't have been Orrin coming out of that place in Harlem, like a sort of basement church really. The light . . . but maybe, just conceivably maybe. . . . Oh, the hell was that their own dotty academic dispensation was enviably foreign to the private colleges, founded as many of them were before the nation itself. So should he make a move? Could he get a "call"? Damn it, there was no hope at a civil service hole like Lincoln of that; the only call you got at the city colleges was to the Un-American Activities Committee. As the saying went, the teacher's freedoms at Lincoln were as academic as they come.

Which brought him back to Bunch. In local journalese Hoyd's clippings told him that the new Negro Muslim movement was in danger of being listed as subversive by the Attorney-General. It further alleged that the Muslim network of Radiant Scarf Clubs

(radiant scarves?) boasted a membership including "prominent civic authorities." Well, Orrin had been civic, and an authority in a way, but surely he couldn't be considered prominent. No, no, it was impossible. Hoyd stuck the rectangle of paper away and started tackling his themes. He was through a couple when the obviously genuine contents of a screed in green ink drew him short. Author—Ira Stern. Ah yes, the saintly bird with the bi-focals who did try so awfully hard. A lad who had apparently done a course with Orrin, too. And if he were telling anything approaching a tenth of the truth, he'd been given a run-around in a resort hotel that would have made Dickens blink his eyes. In such sweatshops the bus boys had no union and . . . dammit, it was hopelessly unfair. Hoyd felt cross.

Glaring out the window, his watery eyes met a brick wall, then the used-car lot bursting with frustrated neon tonight. *Wattabuy! Speedoo! Coupe de Ville Smooooth Ride—a 'Honey!* Suddenly, beyond these "owner-tested" euphemisms, Hoyd's seeking gaze found the light between palazzi. He saw the eyes of brown Italian children, a tin table sticky with vermouth in a gallery off a blazing street. The ginsoes on the make. A shattered church, two chairs in the shade, out of the knifing sun. Oh that bursting secret he had prised from ailing Europe's bosom. The moment of apocalypse when all the world had been a vision and he'd learned what it meant to be human. Hoyd tried hard to perform his sarcastic smile. He reached for his telephone. And the number he dialed was that of Alexander MacKennan IV, in Beekman Place.

Any addict of the evening gossip columns knew Alex ("Jobo") MacKennan as the youthful heir to the Bratt Hotel Enterprises, established at the turn of the century and flourishing since. "Brattscion" had been *Time's* last coinage for the present incumbent, who had won his niche in the weekly news magazine for current extensions of the chain throughout the Caribbean, a delightful pastime for a man of many millions and one of which *Time* heartily approved ("NonRed-lining yanqui puts smile in

Caribscene"). Hoyd hadn't seen or spoken to MacKennan for over a decade. They exchanged Christmas cards. For the truth was that in a small Italian street, well covered by a competent German sniper, Hoyd had saved MacKennan's life.

"Jobo?" he asked after percolating the secretarial retinue. He winced as he spoke, either at the unfamiliar word on his tongue or at the memory itself. "This is Hoyd Rushzak here."

MacKennan expressed delighted surprise. He hadn't forgotten. For him, too, that moment had been the tightest of his life. There was a violet gouge on the outside of one thigh to remind him of it each time he took a shower. They chatted in a friendly, if restrained, manner and MacKennan invited Hoyd and Marlene round to dinner.

"We'd love to. Toward the end of the term like this, however, most of us are in pretty perpetual hibernation under papers, you know." Hoyd drew breath. "However, it might be best if I saw you. I have a favor to ask, if I may." MacKennan's instant positive attested the credit Hoyd was reluctantly tapping. He plunged on: "I am right in assuming you own those preposterously dissolute hotels that go by the name of Bratt?"

"You are, indeed." MacKennan chuckled.

"That would include the Chestleton-Bratt in Vermont?"

"Most certainly would."

"The manager's name is William Rich, is it not?"

There was a pause. "That's right. How did you know? Have you been there recently?"

"He isn't a nice manager, Jobo."

"Tell me about that," MacKennan came back after a moment. "Better still, come round and see me over a drink. I'm much concerned our places be well-run and anyway I don't like to overhear allegations about the staff without proper substantiation."

"You bet," said Hoyd, and after fixing the appointment he hung up. Noises were filtering from the apartment behind. Chiefly dull thuds. What tribulations of some human bat, or

overgrown fly, or discouraged werewolf, were his infants watching on TV tonight? He stood up and closed his eyes. His leg ached a little. For some reason he heard a voice crying distantly, "Hit him! Hit him! *Hit him again!*"

Hoyd had a sudden anguished yearning to make an absurdly plutocratic gesture, something a man like Jobo could do twice a minute, he longed for all the unfulfilled promises which advertising stirred, and for which these students of his were the pawns. He lunged to the door and slunk down the passage to the refrigerator. Howling came from a bedroom. "*Hittim again!*"

Was Orrin guilty, then, of some insane association unknown to them all but known to Big Brother CCMCE? If so, what was guilt? As he fiddled in the kitchen, Hoyd felt that only indeed some unwarrantable, suicidal extravagance could succeed in saving him. Talking with Jobo, remembering it all, he sought again for a life where everything came to the surface. This wasn't it. At the moment his home affairs resembled a rather inefficiently organized underworld. And frankly the only way to get out of it, beyond massacring his family, was by earning more money. To make, as they said, the killing. But he had sold no textbook this year and didn't look like scoring now.

Inside the icebox he could find no beer. Nothing. Only—a gardenia corsage going brown. Great Scott! He was taking Marlene out tonight? To what? That off-Broadway Ionesco show. Help. He caught sight of himself in a mirror. He looked more like a wandering clown with a crew cut than ever. "*Hittim, hittim ag-ain!*" Silence.

"Hoyd?"

"Yoo hoo, honey," he yodeled in a Georgia drawl.

She came with a rope of pearls in one hand, her rounded arms much in evidence. He looked at his wife with curiosity. An anonymous child, damp pants dangling, trailed furiously behind her.

"Joel's got to have glasses, isn't it too bad."

"Did the doctor say so then? Shut up!" he told the child with

unusual vehemence. "Do you know how Lamb liked babies? Boiled."

"Here, help me with this, would you? We'll be late."

"We always are."

While he did up her necklace Marlene told him of the day's kindergarten crises. One brat had poured its water colors down another brat's back, the latter the screaming sibling before him. He sketched a perfunctory gesture of consolation at the infant, who started untying his laces.

"How are the papers coming?"

"I got a few done. About half a dozen turbojet maestros hit the dust."

"Think you'll have time to cook up something for the MLA meeting over Christmas?"

"No," he said through his pipe. He hadn't yet told Marlene he'd let his membership lapse, primarily to save seven dollars a year but secondarily, after the Bunch affair, to keep clear of all affiliations altogether. Talking at professional gatherings didn't help you at Lincoln anyhow—merely got you into trouble. Roman, of course, as he ironically informed her now, was speaking on eighteenth century references to the clyster. But as he worked on her clasp, Hoyd's mind was absent. He had enough money in his pocket, he supposed, to pay the imminently arriving baby sitter and take Marlene to a Chinese dinner after the show. But prescription spectacles would once again turn the scales enough; he'd have to go to the bank to increase his loan.

"Okay?"

She turned and he removed his pipe. She patted a few stray locks. Marlene was still young enough for her skin to contain that look of blood, as if a candle were held behind some amber fruit, and she was Jewish enough to look unconventionalized. The connoisseur in self-consciousness felt a roaring in his ears. With a rush of presence the village they had cleared near Loreto came back to his mind, before he'd been hit. The incredible stoic poverty and yet the most *constant* people he had met. A human

nature did exist. With a gasp he seized his wife's loose sure body and pulled her to him and kissed her in the kitchen. A second's surprise and she responded gratefully.

"Have you ever thought of . . . ?"

"What?" she asked white-faced.

"Oh I don't know." Slowly he got the light smile to his lips. She was watching him doggedly. With a sort of submissive sarcasm he added, "Clearing out. Making a fresh start somewhere else." He limped off toward the bedroom. But halfway there he turned, "Marlene, did you know, I mean that between 1922 and 1947 over seventy million Europeans were uprooted, deported, or killed?"

Full she stood in the passage; he thought she looked frightened. "What made you say that?"

"I don't know." Then without looking at her he added, "I don't want to betray our past." Then after a second's hesitation he said in a bantering tone, "Visitations of the demon of high seriousness. Sorry, my dear."

He was about to turn but she raised her arms to him in a quick and unquenched gesture. Her voice was pitched higher than normal as she said, "Hoyd, you know something. I love you so."

Searching drawers and closets for hints of your wife's whereabouts was hardly an honorable profession at the best of times, and Digger Davies heartily detested it now. The task was scarcely improved by the fact that by this time she knew he searched her things. As a matter of fact, she hadn't been back to the apartment for a number of weeks on end. Though he dared tell no one that.

Digger was glad it was the week before Christmas already, and that the term had entered its final excruciating rush. He gazed again at his personal picture of Geneviève in succinct bikini, as he had met her first. From this he glanced at the evening paper and the cut of her there dancing with some Malayan

Prince at Embers. What particularly disturbed Digger about this latest photo of his wife was that Genne was wearing a big balmacan collar that didn't belong to any dress he knew her to own at all. Was it true she had finally deserted him then? Was shackling up with someone else? No more of those stagily drunken dawn returns that had so maddened, yet gladdened, him in the first years of their hopeless marriage? How much trouble would she—*could* she—get him into yet?

Actually he adored his wife, whom he had picked off the pearl-hot sands of a Porquerolles beach during a Fulbright. But Geneviève hadn't settled to New York. (The understatement of the century.) She'd turned out to be one of those impoverished Europeans whom the sensational side of American life had totally overcome. So at the moment, knowing her in cosmopolitan collision on a distant dance floor, Dig could enjoy nothing. Nothing would satisfy him. In this tension of intellectual indifference, this mandragora of the spirit, poor Digger—suspecting yet strongly loving—told over his damned minutes. They had really come to hate each other perfectly now. His fingers were shaking when the telephone went.

"Digger? Mac here. Sorry to bother you at home but I'm getting worried."

"Tell me all." Digger's eye roved over schnorkel and fin, face-mask and weighted belt, the skin-diving paraphernalia he had hung up here as trophies of their planned return. When he would woo her all over again. . . .

"It's about Mesrob. Don't say anything about this but I think he's got ambitions for the Presidency."

For a second Digger had to think. Which Presidency? Ah, of course. The tiny, tiny, very old man, whose face always looked as if it'd just been thrust against meshing, and who could occasionally be seen patiently munching a sandwich through obligatorily open doors marked **PRESIDENT**, was said to be running for Senate.

"It's impossible, Mac."

"Don't you put it past him. He's been firing agenda at me daily for the past two weeks. Orrin's hearing is going up to State in February, so it seems." The Secretary paused. "Mesrob plans to save him from the lions. And so present himself to the Commissioner as champion of civil rights, and our *next* college Prexy."

Digger was unable not to chuckle. "Oh rich. Well, at least Mes can hear." He didn't personally entertain it as a possibility at all.

Mac Hamrin, however, was of another mind. "What I want to know, Dig," he baited his reluctant Pococurante, "is your answer if at the first meeting next term Mesrob fulfills his threat to call for a Departmental testimony on behalf of Bunch. I mean, the real thing. A signed round robin to CCMCE. If necessary, the Governor."

"I'd support him," said Digger after a moment. "I'd sign."

"Thanks." Hamrin, he knew, was taking this down. Such was even evident in the rapid way the Secretary now altered the conversation. "Shall I see you at the Statler? You going to listen to Wroth on *Paradise Regained*, by any chance?"

"No," Digger retorted shortly. He didn't plan to take in the MLA over Christmas. The last time he'd gone to one of those conventions he had sat through an exposition of an Elizabethan lyric by a pundit from Purdue who had pronounced trough to rhyme with bough. Digger had at first taken it for a gag; then realized the man had never seen a trough in his life. Let alone heard a nightingale sing.

After more gossip Hamrin rang off. With a flicker of queer fear in his spine Digger stared at his skin-diving equipment. This evening it seemed to mock him horribly, his impotence, his solitude. He remembered the rumor Paul Kristoff was currently circulating, that Orrin had been mixed up in a textbook finagle. Adoptions at Lincoln meant millions for the firm concerned and the fairy's flimsy story had it that Williamson, McNeery had got Orrin to keep on an anthology, against one by a rival firm. Had Bunch, then, accepted a bribe? Digger thought it highly unlikely

and by this time his teeth, in any case, were set. He would vote to support poor Orrin to the death.

What was so frightful tonight was this jealousy. The green-eyed monster grew and grew and Digger had begun to panic at his powerlessness to stop its onslaughts. He had been through Genne's jewel-case twice already, in an effort to find some clue or other. It wasn't any good. It didn't stop. He'd have to go out again. The Columbia Library would be open for another couple of hours and he wanted to check on some possible student plagiarism. He put on his coat and hastened off. Forty minutes later, having completed his task and found the whole of the *Hamlet* chapter in *The Sacred Wood* improbably lifted by a boy called Jesse Paul, Digger let his footsteps guide him through the Periodical Room. Here he flipped aimlessly at the new quarterlies, sampling an article here, a review there. *Canapés* of criticism. The new issue of *Partisan* was as hilarious as ever.

What was it so hypnotic about these stacks of little magazines, and their overeducated contributors? Digger surmised it was the battle between criticism and creation that was charted in this earnest ossuary, a battle in which the former had the definite edge. In a corner he caught sight of Roman beavering up his second talk at the Christmas meeting, this one on the caesura in Akenside's *Hymns*. What these supposedly objective scholars really enjoyed was the ax job—subtle if need be, but just as disintegrating as humanly possible within the laws of libel and that "fair play" allowed to reviewers.

Had Dwork eaten Twov in *The Blane Review*? Had Twov made his surrejoinder yet to Borovski's letter concerning Tyson's review of Potts in *Wield*? And was Tyson really going to "blow Gissing criticism wide open," after all? Was it true, moreover, that *The Dentor Review* had refused to publish Bill Alesani's rebuttal of Zug? That Bill was consequently suing them? That Zug was suing Bill? That Shelton Fink was going to consume all the editors of *Polyphony* in an article in *The Nitterling Newsletter*?

The people who squeaked away at the back of these grotesquely ephemeral quarterlies didn't really care tuppence for insight in criticism, Digger considered. They didn't really care for criticism (an art) at all, substituting for it analysis (a technique). In this way they paralleled more closely than they'd care to think the shirt-sleeved supervisors who passed for professors in the Lincoln labs. Why, some of the learned journals on these stacks had announced circulations of as many as 350 copies per issue.

Yes, the more he read the more he realized it was true that these silver-lip scholars felt at home with techniques. They loved to worry things out, wagging their heads over exhibits of Teutonic dissection, performances of masochistic concentration which any civilized individual could only read by holding on hard to the arms of his chair and gritting his teeth. After all, a demonstration of *total* obscurity could lift a bad book into the realm of potential masterpiece. As Lorenzo had put it to him once—"You go through a fantastic parade of intellectual pyrotechnics. A set of ingenious, semi-insoluble and apparently convincing arguments snows you for sixteen pages. And what comes out, Christ-mighty? Ice cream, man, ice cream."

Back again in his apartment he mixed himself a stiffish vodka drink, first metering the calories. It wasn't any good. There was that loneliness again, all the unused effects. For a while he corrected papers, then tried the radio. A couple of village idiots were discussing best-sellers, and over WQXR there was the new book on the *Index Hightetis*. Digger made his decision. He needed a contrast, some "undifferentiated" life. He cashed a check at his liquor store and took a cab to a niterie, a place of the kind described by *The New Yorker* as "bold and brassy," the genre in short frequented by Genne. He wanted not to think.

It turned out to be later than the neurotically anxious professor imagined, and the place was working under a full head of steam as he settled to a table at the back. Pinned in the crotch of a piano a blonde was belting out ballads. Then the combo was fan-

faring, the lights rheostatted down, Digger sank, *no* the stage rose and a pair of baby-spots fixed a girl, nude save a string of pearls and a slipping jockstrap who squirmed on the penny-sized maple strip in the middle of it all. Cheered for an encore as "Geneva, the Exotic Danseuse," she went into a set of nihilistic eurhythmics that left nothing to Digger's imagination and, indeed, added to it. He found himself liking Geneva. She had a leonine figure with a Russian back, schizophrenically streaked hair, and a face that seemed slightly familiar. Perhaps it was simply because she looked like a hipshot cross between stars like Karin Volkert and Sarita Montiel. Suddenly, as she bounced a bumptious hip in his direction, his jaw slacked, he heard himself saying aloud—"I gave that girl a D." Then she was exiting to yells. Couples rose to dance. Was he seeing straight? Sue Libermann in his English 2?

Digger stayed drinking a while, enjoying the music, and the view. At a neighboring table sat a stubby youth, bad skin, tufts of hair, and sporting Mickey Mouse socks. In the teeth of the waiter's scornful protestations he was nursing out a cup of coffee and studying an electronics text. Digger observed the gilded Lincoln dust cover, when Geneva herself reappeared and, wearing gray slippers, a cashmere sweater, tight silk pants and a big smile, threaded her way through the tables to plump herself audibly beside the boy. The student barely looked up. "It figures," was what Digger heard him mutter to himself. The girl, however, seemed in exuberant fettle and as she ordered gin and tea Digger ventured to lean across. By this time he was certain Genne wasn't there.

"You'd be Miss Libermann, wouldn't you?"

"Why hi, Professor Davies. It'd be a plesure to have you join us, I'm sure. *Un encanto*. Eddie, move over. Get on, you jerk," she whispered.

"I didn't recognize you," Digger said when he'd joined them and been introduced ("Professor Ralph Davies," proudly), "not with the, er, stage makeup on."

"You liked my act? Honest?" She asked it with the puppyish enthusiasm of someone discussing her first effort at baking pie. "¿Verdad?"

Recalling the refined lubricity of her hypogastric contortions in the final phase, Digger answered with sincerity: "I did enjoy it, Miss Libermann. Do you do this often, by the way?"

"At Raymond's? I *work* here." Her face lost interest. She frowned into her cup. "Nightly 'cept Sundays and Mondays. Saturday late shows are the best if you can catch them. I take off more, see."

"More?" Digger noted that there was little between Geneva and her cashmere.

"And on Fridays too I give." She giggled creamily. "Don' I, Eddie?" The boy called Eddie Drosa grumbled some agreement from the depths of his text. "He has a Chem quiz at seven to-morrow," she explained, adding to a murky individual making inviting gestures as he passed their table, "You can pull in your eyes, feller."

"And you find this work remunerative?" Digger asked the stripper student, or student stripper.

"How?"

"It pays well?"

"Oi, sure. See, I worked part time as a dentist receptionist my first term at school, then I cut the boys' hair in the fraternities for a buck the throw. I'm really and truly a *wonnerful* barber, ain't I, Eddie. Then I did hat-check here and one night the manager sends me out." She shook her head in wonderment. "How I made it, I'll *never* know. My necklace practically lynched me yet. So first he called me Belmar. Next he changes it to Ingallil and then to Ceylon, like when it hit the news, then when a summit conference come on, why the M.C. turns it to Geneva as a gag. It stuck."

"Yes. I see." Digger was feeling much better. He gallantly rose. "Would you care to dance?" He threw a glance of inquiry at Drosa first, but the lad was still lost in his text.

"*Con su permiso, Señor,*" she laughed as she edged out.

Dancing with Geneva was unbelievable.

"But this is a cha-cha," she said after an indeterminate period.

"It's no good," he told her ear. "I've only got one night-club step. I change my expression, that's all."

"For a cha-cha jus' walk like a camel. You *got* it."

"I'd like to compliment you on your name."

"Sue?"

"On the class card I have it's Surrell."

A freckle of saliva glistened on one tooth as she grinned back—"And you're oh so right. Momma did adapt my name from a book."

"Of course she did. Why, all over the Bronx at this minute mothers are calling their infant girls Manina, after a character Brigitte Bardot played in a movie. And I don't have to mention the Debbies. You know, in another class I even have a girl with the first name of Nisida, after the heroine of G. W. M. Reynolds's nineteenth-century *Wagner: the Wehr-Wolf*. Also a young gentleman called Zion, born in the year of the Balfour Declaration."

"Cute! Eddie's sister's called Illona."

"Illona," he echoed, warming to the work, "that's probably an adaptation of Lenina; after all, she'd be born not much more than a decade after Huxley's *Brave New World*."

"Wrong!" she enthusiastically exclaimed. "Illona was their Momma's improvisation from Olenina d'Alheim."

"Ah yes." He nodded. "The dedicatee of Alexander Blok's *Childhood Poems*."

"Terrif! Eddie's Momma was real tanked on Blok when she first come from, well, where she come from."

The dance step changed. Couples started twisting. The girl became an off-center cement-mixer, inviting his cooperation as chief engineer.

"Which reminds me," he ventured after a moment, "weren't you Miss Superior Posterior Number Thirty-Four? I thought I

recognized . . . well, isn't there some trouble going on between you and that Miss Sullivan?"

The girl pouted prettily. "You read *Eagle*, Professor. You really think Fitz has better sitty-billies than me?"

"The matter might as well remain academic." The drink was beginning to hit him now. "Maybe Miss Sullivan is prone to boast a bit."

"Yeah, mainly she's prone, Professor. An' I got more muscle in mine. Like did you ever see Fitz on a barstool, f'rinstance? You know what they dub that quail at Sigma Pi? *Miss Twinklebutt*, indeed. Well, dear *Miss Twinklebutt* claims I cheated in the comp. She's mad to win it, see. She claims the shorts in my picture were wet."

"Were they?"

The pert expression clouded. The head shook. "I *ashure* you, Professor. Jus' well damped to cling. I mean, that kid's got crime on her face. You can see it." All at once, without transition, she shot at him—"How come I on'y got a D on that last composition, huh?"

It was time to call a halt. Anyway talking was becoming difficult. The dance had turned into marks of punctuation more than anything. "I'm afraid my grades are final, Miss Libermann."

Back at her table the girl kicked her boy friend's shin—"Wake up, lovebird." Then she extended a friendly hand. "Like you come a Friday, Professor, and I'll sneak you a seat at the side. *Ultima función*." Cheerfully she wrung his hand in hers. "110 on the grip meter!"

"Enjoyed our talk," he said. Back at his own table, however, he found an unowned blonde. Nor did this young lady move when he joined her, implausibly enough explaining she'd lost her way on returning from "the little girl's." Would Digger get her a drink? Digger did. She turned out to be a steno from a dictaphone company called Pat and as the evening wore on, he began to contemplate infidelity. He had never once been unfaithful to his beloved Genne, but now. . . . Sue Libermann slung him a

smile, stirring a new dose of gin into her tea. Others could do it easily enough; why couldn't he? Bitterly he ordered a carton of yoghurt sprinkled with wheat germ, and washed this down with a quart of orange juice into which had been whipped two raw eggs and a cupful of sunflower seeds. He was baffled with pain.

Finally, when he left Raymond's with Pat lying on his left arm, he was too drunk to care. "Florida's aright if you're an orange," she was for some reason blurring. In the clear night New York was like a detonation upward, aspiration of the absolute, a glittering thing you hated or adored, as you hurtled along. Being drunk was fine.

"Mesrob for President!" he bawled.

"Whassat?" This Pat's hair was blowing in her face.

"A Majorcan proverb," he replied, hailing a cab. But as they rushed rootlessly north, the girl reclining as if aghast beside him, the single absorbing emotion of his life returned. Even this idiotic opiate couldn't beat it, then. One doll-like head tumbled on his shoulder. Too drunk to screw? He hoped as much. He remembered his medical books. Excessive sexual stimulation (and he could picture Pat causing excessive sexual stimulation) resulted in hypertrophy of the prostate—no activity at all resulted in the same. Six of one, half a dozen of the other. Almost weeping, Digger most savagely cursed, watching the meter as it ticked his damned minutes.

INT . . . DAY . . . Office door *Alexander MacKennan IV* opens slow—figure enters—MacKennan doesn't rise, indicates chair to man coming in—William Rich, heavy, florid, early fifties, pale suit overpressed, hurries to desk, then disconcerted takes seat, dropping his handkerchief as he does so. Most of the time we might keep MacKennan in MS, and Rich in MCU and CU . . .

R I C H

You wanted for to see me, Lexy? I caught the first plane down. Boy.

MACKENNAN

I'm glad you did that, Bill.

RICH

Jesus, this city. What a rat race.

CAMERA PANS left as he fans with the handkerchief now retrieved, then tucks it up one sleeve . . .

RICH

Frankly, I wouldn't live here if you gave me the place, Lexy. It's nice to visit. You got something you want for to tell me, then?

MACKENNAN

I don't believe you ever did go to college, did you, Bill?

RICH

Uh. No. Why, Lexy, that is, we weren't all born as fortunate as you, I guess. Say, what's the deal? You knew all that when you took me on. Frankly, I'm proud to think when I think what I done without so much as a high school diploma. If I recall correct, I don't believe Abe Lincoln himself needed. . . .

MACKENNAN

I'm going to give you that chance all over again, Bill.

RICH

What is this?

MACKENNAN

I just don't like to think of one of my managers with a grudge against college-educated help coming. . . .

RICH

You're not firing me, Lexy? Not just for what some sniveling little bus boy who come up one summer. . . .

CU . . . disbelievingly grins but as he meets MacKennan's eye his face changes . . . clamps hands to knees, bunching the material there, slowly rises . . .

MACKENNAN

Miss Denman has your check outside. She'll give it you on your way out.

RICH

You're kidding.

MACKENNAN

I'm not, you know.

RICH

Now just listen to me, Lexy. What's all this about? I get all sorts up at the hotel. All right, I can't help it if they tell tales behind my back. Everybody always said you was funny with money but hell, this. . . .

MACKENNAN

I wish you'd leave.

RICH

I got a right. . . .

DSLVE

As Christmas approached the city grew more crowded. Lincoln College, which believed more strongly in the savior of nuclear fission than one out of Bethlehem (Pal.), took the blessed event as routine and worked up to Christmas Eve. No one sang carols in the hallways. No holly was hung, and no unneeded mistletoe. Such would only give the cleaning men extra in the recess, and the city refused to pay overtime. Absolutely no punch parties were thrown by the faculty, though the consumption of cheap Scotch rose in the fraternities. On the day preceding Christmas Eve a late afternoon class broke up and, pouring out of the gates, saw that a group of children had started a small bonfire there. It was a cold night and some stayed to warm themselves by those shrill flames.

Among these was Carol Lester, dressed in a sloppy brown skirt with the remnants of a Buffalo Bill fringe, one patch pocket housing a white mouse she'd been assigned in a Psych course and otherwise stuffed with odd scraps of paper on which, throughout the day, she had scribbled a number of wild images, completely pure and shining. She watched the flames with an emotion approaching greed. Burn! Burn! she wanted to cry, staring at the sickly, clever faces of the children here. Flames, take the skies! But a guard soon came and stamped them out.

New York was seething. Never had there been such a prosperous Yuletide, every index anywhere was up, and the entire nation was preparing to get its teeth into the turkey too. In midtown Manhattan the crowds ambled good-naturedly through the slush, past the smiling Santas, to music-box hymns from the scintillating stores, in all of which the bonging of sales bells rang out incessantly. It was as if (so at least three eighteenth century men had already told their wives) the great principle of plenitude, for which evil was a kind of deficiency, was being enacted in a grandiose peanut-'n'-popcorn parlor a continent wide, while out in the bay, over the wild waves, the Statue of Liberty held high her dripping ice cream cone, a Physics text under one arm.

For the average Lincoln student this period represented simply an acceleration in the murderous work pace. It was at this time of term that students flunked out like flies—to pick up jobs here, there, and everywhere, at approximately treble the salary of their instructors. The New York subway—The Mole as it was known—was bursting at its seams, and threatening its usual strike. Since most of the student body spent three or four hours on it daily they counted on a seat for their homework. These old soldiers of New York's transit system not only knew the tergiversations of every individual line intimately, they were familiar with every method short of judo for obtaining a place to sit.

Lewy Jantaneo, for instance, riding the dark ages of the IRT, excluded chivalry from his daily jousting. Before the stampede into the car Lewy picked his passenger to stand behind, preferably a male, and preferably big as a blocker in the rush, but above all *not a Bronxite*.

A Bronxite was distinguishable by: (a) soiled copy of *New York Post*; (b) paper bag, lunch box, or roll of work clothes; (c) no hat, scuffed shoes. No chance of a seat at Jackson or even Prospect Avenue if you got behind that kind of highlander, Lewy knew.

No, his eyes were trained to spot the businessman, with attaché case and dead pipe (pipe smokers were regarded with suspicion

in the Bronx), who would get out for the railroad at Grand Central or 125th Street. Lewy made like a magnet to the guy with the rolled umbrella and *New York Times* (folded financial pages outward), the man who would sit with his shoes together.

Such tactics were only the start. Sleepy Tommy Dehl, who sometimes rode with Lewy and was a far tougher character than he appeared, often demonstrated the importance of the *second stage* in the tournament. This was a matter of placing inside the carriage, calculating the movements of the nearest exurbanite to the nearest door, how the fat fellow with the squashed fedora on his way to East Harlem also eying the Wall Streetnik would have to step back, out of the other's path, thus eliminating himself as a contender. Then, in competition with only one other knight, the pale-haired Dehl was utterly uninhibited. He would cough directly into the face of his rival, and it would be what Eliza Doolittle would call "a nasty, 'acking cough," too. While the guy was still covering his face, Tommy would slip into the vacated seat. He had what he called "educated elbows." Lewy had seen him step on a challenger's toe. "For the crusher," Tom used quietly to advise, "butt him in the groin wit' your knee. And as you take the seat, don' forget to say, 'Dreadfully sorry, old chap,' and smile politely. Always remember you're a Lincoln man."

It was a tough training ground all right, especially at this time of year, and by now Lewy had learned to ignore the sleeping beauty on his right who might from time to time lean his greasy head on his shoulder while he tried to crack a problem in Calc, or the worn old woman standing accusingly in front of him. At a big belly hovering over his newly won seat the only "ethical" thing to do was to tell himself stories about the crime of overpopulating the globe and feign sleep.

On their way to one especially lavatorial subway station in the "wrong rain" (*pace* Dylan Thomas) George Liemen and Ira Stern paused either side their friend, Stanley Schochet. For Stanley was walking up that hill bending his knees deeper with each step, his small feet scooting along. Groucho Marx yet.

"Listen, ol' sport, just what you playin' at?" George finally interposed. "You bust a gut on Christmas Eve or sum'pin'?"

Calm Ira clarified, his brow wrinkling into deeper lines as he spoke—"He's not accepted the assumption that this is a hill."

Stanley stalked on, furious to have been found out. He'd show 'em. Just as he'd shown that corny sneerer Richie in the pool-room. Weiss guy, he called him, though as a matter of fact—despite neither of them deigning to acknowledge it—they had become firm friends.

For of course it was true. As true as the fact that, for all the rain, Stanley had no raincoat on. He didn't for the simple reason that to have worn one would have been to recognize another basic assumption of physical existence. Why did man admit he was wet? What was the meaning of dryness, then?

"Now Stan, don' blow a gasket," George was pleading as they neared the station. "I didn't mean anything. Honest. Don' forget it's the *season of good will*," he panted. "An' the half's all but over."

God! How weary, stale, flat and unprofitable, etcetera. Separated at last from his friends, in the 8th Avenue Local, Stanley thought of Carol Lester and the rain. She was the only girl who had ever interested him, the only one who hadn't sneered from the start. The only one *without yellow teeth*.

Why, even Ira liked Carol. George, of course, didn't like for her cutting the lashes of one eye. That was to be expected. For Carol *knew*. She knew and knew and knew. He'd been hit by her from the first. Yes, she was the only girl he'd ever seen wearing the seam down the front of her stockings. So they'd got along famously and he'd even sold his second-hand Rambler now in order to take her out more often. And look at rain, for instance. Carol was the only girl he'd ever met who loved walking the city in the rain, heedless, her hair growing lanker as they silently paced, late into the night. He'd been pleased, moreover, that she'd come on their first date dressed in fly-fronted slacks, a sartorial mannerism that could only (even for a Lincoln coed)

be of psychological advantage, but which had expressed just that reversal of reality Stanley dug. He gripped the parcel he had to deliver to an address on Madison. Felt like bottles. The service hadn't told him what it was. He hoped to hell it wasn't perfume again. Jesus, that stink.

Heat burned. Cold chilled. Yet to make these contradictions, instead of contraries, indicated a lack of resiliency Stanley loathed. "Oh I'm dyin' of cold," some teeth-chattering creeper would come in from the snowy campus to exclaim—and hug the classroom radiator, steaming. A very bad reaction. Murder would enter Stanley's heart at that. His eye caught a cigarette ad—*ARISTOCRATS (For that feeling of insolence)*. A toothpaste came in plaids. How to get out of it all, beat it, end ahead.

For instance: why did that jumpy smart aleck walk *round* the carriage pole, instead of through it? Scowling Stanley saw no reason to admit the presence of objects, any more than of an afterworld. Not unless one wished to. He breathed hard, still with the same congested and rude look. Sometimes he would leave his briefcase, stony with tech texts, lying on the floor of a classroom or corridor and, when someone stubbed against it with a curse, would instantly take interest—"There," he'd say with satisfaction, or "Hurt, huh?" Those who maneuvered around the test object he despised. Any *a priori* perception he detested.

Thus the phenomenon of weightlessness was one that had immediately fascinated Stanley. He'd love to try a space ride, or even one of those no-gravity chambers they had rigged up on the campus and where the scientists tumbled like puppies. Drinking might drown you under such conditions! Hearing no help to the astronauts at all! And Stanley closely noted that the feeling of detachment from physical reality attracted man in his deepest fibers. He thought of the euphoria of balloonists, the famous "rapture of the depths" fifty fathoms beneath the sea. The antic disposition and sense of the sublime man experienced under such relief from the ties of the earth made mere imaginative fantasy something unworthy of him. Cousteau had recorded, for example,

how he and other divers, though supplied with writing materials, never felt tempted to describe the bounty of those deeper reefs—"It was impossible not to think of flying to heaven," was all he'd written. Stanley felt slightly ashamed of the little surrealism he had once poked into after some crap-course recommendation, while even the lewdest pornography left him icy.

He emerged from The Mole in a restless mob, walked two blocks east, downtown a bit, entered a building and buzzed for the elevator. Up on the fifteenth floor there didn't seem to be a packing-room entrance to the place; a bronze door admitted him to surprisingly cool surfaces, a flagged passage presided over by a naked Roman boxer, near whom a fountain trickled with appropriate meekness. A radio seemed to be going. Another lousy stalag for conformity, thought Stanley crossly as a girl came through a creamy door and beckoned him down the hallway after her. She had on a white coat and turned to toss him a pleased look—"They'll take care of you in there."

Burnished by copper handles (*ROMA-AMOR*, he saw), more sheets of glass glowed before him. He took a pace. They opened as he approached. Stanley chuckled. Photoelectric, huh. Inside another girl purred, "You had an appointment, sir?"

"Not exactly," he said, surly at her overemphasis of the last word. "I just have to leave this." He showed the packet. Yes, it clinked.

"I see." She made off with a frown. Stanley tried to settle to some magazines. It sounded as if a party were progressing next door. What was this? Vaguely he wondered whether there'd be any ketchup sandwiches left when he hit home that night.

"Christmas Eve, friends, and this your TNTC . . . right now in the vicinity of Grand Central I have Professor. . . ."

Stanley wondered when he'd get back home. He was beginning to feel hungry, very. Where was the radio coming from? He wished the girl would come back. The party was getting louder. Every now and then other white-uniformed ladies stilt-heeled by bearing, like some monstrance or sconce, a kidney-shaped

basin filled with surgical swabs. Then they vanished, shoving at doors with their bottoms. Who was it had said nurses were always rumpy? Stanley wiped at his face to stop the itch.

"... and thanks, Professor Enoch Hill . . . now that your President has declared his political aspirations, who d'you think most likely to succeed for the next. . . ?"

Stanley felt like cutting on the wall-to-wall. What the hell went on here anyway?

"Why . . . right now . . . just orf to Borston to hear Frawst . . . y'see, his ruts. . . ?"

What a charlatan! Stanley crossed to a window and stared listlessly down at the wet street. What he saw was another office building exactly similar to the one he was in. Through its lighted windows compartments of something supposedly termed life could be discerned: a girdled girl going to a file, an elderly woman inserting paper into the platen of her typewriter, a man at a telephone, a youth wheeling, a whole collection of dumb jerks moved or being moved by, or stoking or coaxing or cajoling or wheedling or just plain bullying—*machines*. And all of them hoping one day to score. Why oh why did they seem to process through his chest, why this urgent need he felt to cry? To burst . . . Jesus, how pathetic could you get. Maybe that Bunch professor had seen it all, and felt the same dread, and simply *wanted out*? An odd way to take his ticket, though.

Far below in the street itself, where the trafficators winked till you felt set in the center of a pin-machine, moved millions of machine-made bastards, a lavalike tide of inert mechanisms, all doled through the streets and destined to do absolutely nothing. Why, some of them even imagined they were alive. Stanley shrugged. Why should he care? When all they could do was shuffle their shoes—*forwards, sideways, backwards*. Come to think of it, that was *exactly* what they were, a pack of mature shoes. It was a life whose total emptiness he had never quite realized until this moment.

"Dr. Zurli will see you now, sir."

"Uh?"

Having grabbed his packet, Stanley found himself being ushered down other substantial corridors, off which occasional cubicles were curtained off. And more cool girls. Hey, just what the hell was this yet? Name on a door in textured ebony. The office he was shown into was pale and wide, replete with flat surfaces.

"Dr. Zurli," said a heavy individual, wearing a white jacket and weary eyes. "Please take a seat." With the too slow, tolerant gesture of a hirsute hand covered in gold, he indicated an expansive chair beside his desk. Stanley shrugged into it.

"Jus' come wit' this—delivery service"—but the other appeared not to have heard him.

With a chink of his bracelet, Dr. Zurli laid his palms on the surface before him. His eyes seemed preoccupied, even pained.

"Anyone introduced by Nurse Poggi," he said, "can be sure of a square deal with me."

Stan glanced up. The man appeared to be moaning to himself and toying with a tongue-depressor. Behind his head was hung some cross section of the anatomy, all squirming nerves and grossly engorged capillaries, a terrifying thesaurus of what-could-go-wrong. Stanley averted his eyes.

"Metabolism okay? Maybe needs stepping up a little? A spot too much *pizza pie*, mister?"

"What?" said Stanley.

"You eliminate good?"

"Sure," he piped back indignantly.

"Sweat a lot and all that? Insufficient elimination, and bingo you're in trouble, right?" Dr. Zurli sat singularly motionless for a second. Stanley was fascinated. It was almost as if the man were in danger of sliding off his chair. "We all pay our dues," he whispered. "When did you first observe the *fall*?"

"The fall?" Stanley hollowly echoed, looking about him.

"For a proper diagnosis we got to have details." Now the doctor was nodding gravely, in some expectant coma. "First con-

sultation. X-ray necessary. You know the health laws round here. If it was our Italian office, for instance. Still, guess we can skip some of the formalities. Head Office permitting." He juggled wildly with the test tubes for a moment, then in a tone of extreme resentment snapped, "Sit over there."

"I don't get it." Shaking his head, Stanley took the indicated stool. A light went on over him. The doctor approached. Was he swaying slightly? With a gold pencil he started threading through Stanley's untidy locks, moving around, bumping into him and keeping up a sort of tolerant running commentary:

"One head of hair. Eh? Some dandy growth. *I'll* say. A spot of natural shedding, of course . . . but what in God's name is *this*?"

By now Stanley had become aware that the diagram confronting him was of a human head. Actually, two heads. One all lines and roots, ducts and vessels, spiraled decorously down into a happy scalp. Yes, happiness was written all over it. There was a sense of luxuriant growth, of the whole head being a party-to-things. The other, larger chart was violet and angry, however. Here were writhing tentacles and stunted cells, green veins, gray tissue, the artist's rendering supported, in this instance, by several photographs of eggs, some obscenely bald craniums bent to the camera. As Stanley realized what he had run into, he tried to arrest the ridiculous pity springing up his body, surging sorrow for the all the spokes of that so ill skull flayed before him. This doctor was a nut. He decided to humor him and beat it, quick.

"One rich, one full head of hair, this," Dr. Zurli was now humming along, as he coursed the pencil through Stanley's temples, "*if only it weren't for the pustules!*"

"What?" Stan's hand shot to his head.

"Invisible manifestations."

"I wanna get outa here."

"And so you will, my friend, and so you will. Only, take it easy now. The condition may be purely *local*. That we'll dis-

cover, as they say in the serials, later." He strode to his desk where a telephone promptly rang. "Shut up, will you," said Dr. Zurli into the instrument. Stanley had risen and was edging past the desk toward the door. The doctor extended a hand. There seemed to be a veil over his expression. What a fake! thought Stan. "We can fix it in sixty sessions. Eighty on the cheaper rate."

"Thanks a lot," Stanley answered quickly, "but your charges are too low."

"No guarantee," was the cold reply and then with the same glazed look, almost of suffering, the doctor added, "Not with ichthyosis."

Stanley had observed that the package he was to deliver lay safe on the desk. He was nearly at the door when his attention was literally gripped by the other.

"Particulars required by *law*, the old one-bit routine, my friend," said the doctor with a slyly confident wink. And he began sorting the phials in front of him, pouring from one and then another into a measuring-glass. "Clear you up in no time at all. Touch of merthiolate, no more than 2 percent. Panadin C12. You know, you're *incredibly* wrong about me, young man." He stirred the mixture with a glass rod the size of a small walking stick. Stanley watched this Faustian performance with a queer kind of kinship, his sense of alarm all vanished at once. "Mercuric oxide—here we go! No more secretions. This one I call the Gimp." He squinted through it, raised it over his head, and winked oafishly at Stanley by the door. "Merry Christmas," said Dr. Zurli in a businesslike manner. "I see no reason why it can't be done." And with a dramatically apprehensive smile he drained the concoction he had succeeded in mixing. Stanley watched him with a gulp of amazement. There seemed no after-effects. "That was a Gimp," said the doctor. "A good one."

"You got my package?" Stanley approached a little. "I mean, would you care to sign?"

"Ah yes. Formalities of the law." At which he rummaged in a drawer, fished aside a copy of *Twerp* and produced a fountain pen. He signed Stanley's receipt, seemed to stiffen in momentary concentration, then with a *thuk* worthy of the jungle comics his head dropped on the desk. Stanley left.

He went out not with the feeling of disgust he wanted to have, but rather with a knot of grief in his throat he utterly despised. Through the discreetly anonymous passages he paced, now louder as they were with the distant Christmas revelry, through the hallway where a balding client waited like a dummy, past the brand-new smiling girl and out through the ROMA-AMOR doors. The cestus-carrying boxer bade him goodby. Was he feeling sorrow for this civilization, yet? Down. Down and out.

He refused to accept. Standing huddled in the cold of the sidewalk crowds, Stanley stared in at a shop-window crib, the infant Jesus bawling for a bottle of BLITE. The entire urban setup seemed to him in that Christmassy vision so, so absurdly futile, so cruel and destructive, it baffled him why anyone continued to perpetuate it. A chaos of order where every relationship was soldered through the machine. His face twisted. His deprived pimples seemed to prick him physically and his mouth pursed in an attempt at revolted affection. But the first tears now stung his skin.

Bong-bong! STOP! Go! Walk! DON'T WALK! Faster! Slower! No! Yes! Get in! GET OUT! Cross! Cross, *damn you!* DON'T CROSS! Here, lady. Now! No Passing! DEAD END! Play Street, Goddammit! Street Closed! Center Lane! Now! Now! NOW!

No. . . .

The fanatic impersonality, that fiat of the machine, it wasn't only America, of course, the jolly ole U.S.A. had simply perfected the instruments quicker than most, one day they would train the rivers to run uphill, the sun to go out. The sun to set the world on fire—*there* was an idea! France, Italy, Spain, even Arabia, give China a couple of decades more, thought Stanley

as his thin shoulders shook, just about the time my kids are due for school, they were all heading for the same blind staggers. And Stanley found himself converting his sobs to soundless, lurching laughter. If that was what it was. Ho! Ho! Ho! The entire world was in the grip of *delirium tremens*. So tighten your jockstraps, cats! The firmament's skidding, and I don't mean *maybe*. This next one's really going to be something. With no one around to reassemble the parts.

Turning, Stanley caught sight of himself in a mirror. "Why is it?" he started to say aloud, then stopped, made a long nose at the glass, walked on. The tears were swelling at his eyes. No matter how he frowned as he passed a mailbox. Why, even his mother had observed that he was less "fedup" these days. Not Hamlet then, not an attendant lord, nor even an Ivanov, this sidewalk Savonarola had yet met his Ophelia, his Lady of the Garden. From a midtown pier the lugubrious low of a ship in arrival or departure (what mattered it which?) came faintly to him. He gave in and cried with his heart.

Christmas came to the Lincoln faculty but once a year, and most thanked God for that. Nearly all were snowed under with papers, and at the same time they were forced to act as normal members of normal families.

On Christmas Day itself Digger Davies sat in front of his fake fireplace, moaning chimerically, the latest hit from The Barbarians on flat-out and his Walton humidifier filled with beer. Truth be told, he had called Pat up the night before and the pretty switchboard-operator-cum-secretary-receptionist-sales-girl had come round, they had drunk, she had spent a gloriously unconditional and frightfully discreditable night in his bed, and Digger had woken with the mother and father of all hangovers round his neck.

Everything in the world seemed foully thickened then, his fingers like jellied bananas and his tongue a tennis ball. Pat tried

concoctions of Worcester sauce and raw egg out of Wodehouse, but they didn't help.

"Pity poor you," she declared before tripping off, cast-iron-stomach herself and bandbox neat. "It'll wear off soon."

"I have a feeling this one will wear in."

"Well, I certainly hope you make it for your first class after the break."

"I hope I make it for next semester," Digger had groaned. And with a columbine kiss ("Gee, your *bi-ceps*!") she'd quickly gone. Dictets or no Dictets, you needed a fire hose rather than a shower bath after a night in bed with that piece of lettuce. A very disreputable secretary.

Digger tried to stand up, wondering whether he really would or would not sign Mesrob's plea for Bunch; he steadied himself against a lamp, causing the hi-fi to stop. For a second he stared at the spaceship-like assemblage of equipment around him. Then he put *The Barbarians* on again loud. Loud enough to stop him thinking about ulcers. Or about Mesrob Mins. About the whole lunacy of teaching in New York. About his vanished wife. The sound emerged from behind, as such sound should, and as did the fine spray sent ceilingward by the humming humidifier. Ordinarily this gadget helped combat excessive winter steam heating, warping of furniture and drying out of books and pictures, but to fill it with Miller's, so Digger had discovered, and bask in the beery haze that resulted, was the finest method of dissipating a hangover known to mortal man. Not that he himself felt mortal yet. He switched on his sun lamp and baked a Kubla Khan cocktail, the recipe for which had come to him from *Nugget*. Thus, a muscular Buddha under his lamp, he sat wondering whether life was worth living.

On the other side of town Mac Hamrin, equally worried over Mesrob's caprices for the coming term, spent his Christmas correcting papers, tapping dottles out of his mouthpiece, and ad-

miring the magnificent Wyatt-Earp waistcoat his family had given him at breakfast. Mac Hamrin loved his family and they, in turn, dearly loved him.

Seymour Katzman, in the middle of correcting words like "aditude" and "simmiliar" and "synacism," received a majuscular pair of English flintlocks from his slightly terrified wife. And was likewise grateful. Mesrob's rumored proposal didn't worry him unduly. He was armored. He would sign. If only his daughter Avery . . . there were responsibilities . . . Seymour reached for his dog-eared copy of the document entitled *Regents Rules on Subversive Activities, adopted July 15, 1949.*

Not dissimilarly, Hoyd Rushzak suffered a sudden fear on Christmas night. Marlene's curse had not come on and he sweated the dark hours out in ironically impotent apprehension, the smile strenuously secured to his lips. He knew he could not get any deeper in debt, the bank wouldn't wear it, and if Marlene were really and truly in pod, well then what were they talking about, she'd have to have an abortion. The cost of this operation was not what petrified Hoyd so much as the illegality of the matter; for here would be precisely that chink in the defenses which, in civic employ, could sweep off a lifetime's savings when unearthed by an enemy.

Axel Maine, who had weathered this winter of discontent with the aid of Martinis and fantasies of Armenians, also suffered intolerably. The Brigadier threatened to pay a visit and, rather than watch that trim and steady figure endlessly washing their dishes after dinner (as the Nebraskan oldster always insisted on doing), Ax knew he would have to immure himself in the MLA meeting, like the pasty textbook salesmen who on such occasions lived in the Statler for literally a week on end. On the day after Christmas he took Beth to the Museum of Modern Art where

they *studied* the latest form of action painting, a canvas done entirely in snot (*Gray on White*).

On precisely the same day, Boxing Day, in London town, whither R. J. C. had flown on the expense-paid wings of his radio station, the Cadillac Professor was stepping into an emporium off Sackville Street, several hundred bucks in traveler's checks at a loose end in his pocket. "Got this made by my London tailor," he would say, when he returned in a week's time, "rather nice, don't you think?" Gazing rapturously at those waxed white mustaches, "my" London tailor (a ferret-faced fellow from Cheam) came forward at the double at the sight of the gull. "Certainly, sir"—and in a stern tone to a subordinate, "Suit for Mr. Phipps." A fitter with tape-measures strewn around his shoulders, a hebetate from Hanover Square looking anything but authentic, rapped out the ritualistic numbers as R. J. C. frowned at himself in the mirrors. "Wear like wire, sir. Pure hand-woven Donegal, sir. Lovely weave."

Using Jung on popular culture Bill Beobach was still wrestling, two days after Christmas, with the immense papers that had resulted. One class had been analyzing the semantics of American advertising, with the result that Bill was rapidly turning out competent cadres of motivational researchers.

Outside the President's door in the college itself six large packing cases, which clinked when lifted, stood stacked awaiting "Return to Sender." One of these senders was the firm of Williamson, McNeery, Inc., who, despite the two or three superbly produced first novels they issued a year, were well aware they lived or died by their textbook division. Ivan Vogel noted these packages on a visit to the empty college to prepare the first issue of *The Eagle* for resumption. The would-be Senator, it seemed, was taking no chances. Rumor had it that the city Secretary of

Health, Education and Welfare was against him and it would of course be fatal if the Mayor . . . in short, his Secretary had merely extracted the greeting card from each gift—"In Recognition of Unswerving Devotion to the Public Interest in the Field of Education."

Outside the college itself the educational statisticians were at work and as the year neared its end, it was reckoned that out of the 90-billion-dollar annual budget of the Federal Government approximately 45 billions had gone to strengthen the country's ability to destroy. Other multiple billions had been allocated to replenish the Spanish and German Treasuries, but the amount spent on artistic endeavor and on pure scientific research would not even be considered worth recording, not in the Statistical Abstracts published by the Government of the Grin.

"Ken Watts here. Nine nine nine. *The* magic number with a smile. And right now I have with me Mr. Roy Talyacan, a lower—sorry, Roy, *upper*—junior at Lincoln College. Roy, tell me, who'd you students most like to see succeed the present incumbent as your President?"

"Huh? You say I wuz incompetent?"

"Who'd you like most to see President of your college?"

"Sid Caesar mebbe. Maybe Hy Gardner yet."

"Ha! Ha! Very funny, Roy. You do know, of course, that the President is retiring at the end of June to run in the Senate races next November."

"Nuh."

"You mean to tell me, Roy. . . ."

"Him run? That li'l runt couldn't fall downstairs without assistance."

"Now wait a minute, Roy, easy there. Next you'll be telling me you don't even know the *name* of your President."

"I don'."

"Well, Roy, I. . . ."

The students, meantime, were enjoying themselves as students will. One group of clever engineers had succeeded in raising and placing an Isotta high on the top of the crenellated turret, or Bell Tower as it was called, of Jackson Hall. Where it still rested, not an inch to spare, for this had been quite a feat for the boys and so far New York's Finest hadn't found any engineers sufficiently capable of solving the considerable problem posed by its removal. The Dean of Parking, Elmer Pin, was very worried about it indeed and the whole situation really ruined his Christmas.

In Alpha Pi the connoisseurs of cannery row had given over their gastronomy of the eye in the interests of some last-minute studying for the rote of tests coming up when classes resumed. As usual, they had left the despised crap courses till last and were now trying to assist each other with a truncated Bible, used in one of their Intro to Lits.

"So the whole t'ing's a phooie," crowed one with indignation. "There were three dozen Josephs, Moses never invented mon-nuttin'"

"An' ya ever considered this?" Jesse Paul grinned sickly through a mouthful of Cheez-Bits. (His friend Roy, having spent a Fitzgeraldian Christmas Eve in the Plaza fountain, was currently trying his "aplomb" on Shilla in Brooklyn.) "Why did God wipe out the world, mos' of mankind, that is, at the flood, when a li'l later along the old codger tol' man, Thou shalt not kill?"

"Yair, an' tell me this, willya. Who was Cain's chick? It says right here," another banged at his text, "'And Cain went out from the presence of the **LORD**.' So how come he finds a wife? There *weren't* any other human beings *created*, right?"

Though pan-Jewish, not one of the debaters chewing the rag in the frat room now had the faintest idea of what was in the Bible. The New York City high schools, scared stiff of being in any way denominational, sent them onwards and upwards with

a vague De Mille purée of the creation. And Rabbinical injunctions concerning the inviolacy of the text suited every one of them fine. None felt a particularly pressing temptation to tamper with G-d's Holy Word.

For a while they sat on, debating such absorbing topics as: Did Adam have a navel, and if not why not? From this the importunate pursuers became involved in dating the origin of life. Here the Bible was way off, no doubt about it. Why, every moron knew that the earth cooled between 800,000,000 and 2,000,000,000 years ago and that colonies of atoms teamed up under a torrid sun. All were familiar with the chemistry of the amino acids which first strung together in chains to form proteins. From this subject they moved as one to math and thence to their favorite—physics. Here was learning they could respect. So the chinwag continued, the degree of inarticulacy intensifying whenever anything literary was touched upon. It was an affectation among them, really, a matter of honor. Not one spoke quite as corruptly as when discussing crap (literature). Essentially they were at this moment simply happy to have somewhere to go to to get away from family-filled apartments. Gnawing a knuckle Jesse Paul read aloud the conclusion to his term paper:

It seems to me that one should be interested in the future rather than the past. I fail to appreciate the facts that History give us because I cannot see how this knowledge affect our lives. No one can do anything about history, it is past and cannot be changed.

Christmas Day in the Drosa "home" had been celebrated in princely fashion. Reluctantly abandoning her glutinous Russian fiction, with its Bellas and Ninas and Lisas, Eddie's mother had cooked all morning, assisted by a daughter who fried zeppoli between bouts with Eddie about her math. A mountainous meal was prepared and every scrap of china pressed into service for what was a practically constant series of courses from two to five. The next day Eddie tinkered half-heartedly on the sidewalk

with Melody, his scooter. It was the day his accountant father gave his annual party to the local numbers-racket team, staid elderly Italo-Americans with small stores in the neighborhood. In fact, as a first-generation immigrant, Eddie retained a technician's admiration for the detailed network, plus an underdog pride in the regular defeat of the legal machinery of this man's land by a handful of *wops*. All the same, he was fully apprised of the dangers of the game his father played and wished he'd get to hell out of it. Eddie had no desire to hear his mother picking up the telephone one day and explaining how the head of the household had had to go to hospital and that no, no, he wouldn't be back for a long long time. He thought of Sue Libermann. Raymond's. *Oy*, as the saying went, and *vay!*

Ever since discovering Geneva's true nature Eddie hadn't been the same. Like last week, for instance. He'd taken her to an eat-house in downgloom Manhattan and she'd ordered shashlik, kebabs, Turkish delight, junk like that. Then afterwards she'd insisted on their driving out to Far Rockaway and embracing, definitively, inside a Tilt-a-Whirl car on the deserted Playland there. Cold as it had been, he'd complied.

The truth was that Sue Libermann seemed to be a sexual athlete who regarded intercourse as a teenager might toffee-apples and Eddie appeared to be in for a glandular marathon. Already, in their brief acquaintance, he had enjoyed Miss Superior Posterior 34 in Central Park, on the back seat of Melody, in a tub, and on the darkened rear pew of the Sixth Baptist Church somewhere or other. The last she conceded the mostest. She was *nuts!* And when they did hit a bed, here and there in their metropolitan ambulations, she would insist on telephoning her girl-friend during the more frenzied moments. Now her latest jag was a mad desire to be taken at the precise moment this new rocket was launched at the moon. Jesus, that was Geneva all over, thought Eddie as he prepared to blow out the Lambretta's brakes, a fruitcake. The French had a word for her favorite activity and it wasn't croquette.

"It'll feel jus' like it *always* does," he'd assured her. "Like down here on earth. Are you crazy or something?"

"But think of it lasting for all those miles," she had replied with shining eyes, clutching a saddle-stitched shoulder bag which was all but a Malthusian belt, he'd learned. "*Without being bust.*"

And with a groan he'd answered automatically, "2,938,239,-425,937,322,200,052 miles altogether, if the National Aeronautics and Space Administration fire when the orb is in the most favorable position for the trajectory."

"Oh you know so much." Wriggling her body into his, her chubbies (as she called them) adorning her facade like Clipper Ship figureheads. The trouble was, Eddie had to study. That had been the advantage of a girl friend in Wisconsin. Those days were over now. And outside math, it was getting rough. The chem finals were threatening to be murder.

Weight lifter Jerry Blass, on the other hand, had passed an ascetic Christmas, dieting carefully and drinking nothing stronger than No-Cal. He worked continuously on his *cuts*, or muscles. Both he and Tommy Dehl, Carol Lester's ex, had been employed as countermen over the break and they often paused a moment to stoop-klatch before parting for their respective apartments.

They discussed the good luck of Richie Weiss who had reportedly cleaned up on the track after his TV fiasco.

"When they as't Rich what a cat-o'-nine-tails was he said it was a beatnik with a busy social life."

"So Spider's tip worked out good for him, heh?"

"Nope." Blass shook his straw-colored crop about. "Rich put twelve fifty on some nag Spid' suggested, see, and the cruel little heartbreaker give up."

"Give up?"

"Lay down and died."

"You're not kidding! So how come Richie ended ahead?"

"So Spider sets him on this Miss Dahlia, see. Like, well, Richie's smart, he puts another twenty nicker on the longest odds in the race. A quadruped no one even *heard* of yet. So—phweet! —the filly wins, he sweeps the board jus' like that and now he's taking Fitz Sullivan up airplane-riding at Amityville. 'Matter-a-fack, the Turf Commissioner damn near invalidated the race."

"But he didn't?"

"Nah. He didn't."

"So it's Fitz and Richie. Richie and Fitz. What a combo."

"Sure is. 'Night, Tom."

"'Night, Jerry."

Meanwhile, at almost exactly that moment, a photograph of the distaff side of their discussion was (unknown to her) being passed from hand to hand—strictly male—in a nightspot off the fifties. **THE GIRL WITH THE FABULOUS FANNY** ran the caption this time. *A Seat Repeat!* The picture, showing Fitz in jade earrings, a seaman's jersey and well-seamed short shorts, ended in the pudgy fingers of a baldish rube of sixty years, who had flown in from the coast where he controlled the oil millions that financed a stable of independent film producers. And there it stayed.

Who knew how a copy of *The Eagle* had come to the attention of this table? Possibly some press agent was an old Lincoln lag and still subscribed. However that might be, one of those quirks of circumstance which conjoin reality in an act of meaning and impose upon it the discipline of art, often vulgarized by the generality as *coincidences*, had here truly taken place.

By chance the thick-necked monster of Mogul Productions had absolutely no use for the well-scrubbed suburban look of the ex-Bennington girls who had been cluttering up his movies of late. He was, quite frankly, a professional prattster, and through glinting glasses contemplated Fitzgeraldine's rear divisions with that celestial music in the ears, Pater's "gemlike flame" in the guts, that only a pure collector's item can arouse in the connois-

seur. With the unimpeachable gravity of absolute cliché he shifted a stub of cigar across the gate of his organism and clipped out, "Get that girl!"

A more somber note was struck that night by two other students of the college in a rooming house in Flushing. Mark De Vayo had taken a back room with shower under the name of Robert Browning, the only poet he had liked in his Intro to Lit because there was usually a story present.

Laughing weakly, Mrs. Robert Browning staggered across the floor and made to inspect the shower. No spanielly Barrett, she. Having finally got her semi-accidentally into a bar with him, Mark had supplied this Transient with ten drinks in quick succession, each one of which would have gagged a stevedore, and her heavy body had slackened to a point where she could no more control it, least of all its willowy legs. This latter it was that was striking her as funny now, and she laughed a lot.

"Hey c'mon, Syl. We haven't all that time."

"Whysh I eat that flower, huh?" She was remembering the petals, opening ever wider, it seemed, as they had floated in that last drink. "Mush too strong."

"Make you see double and feel single, what say, Syl?"

He grinned broadly as he began to caress her. She moaned "Don't," once. And then, "No. Please." And once, as he evidently undid something, "Please, Mark, please stop." Some subsiding instinct told Sylvia Hantmann she didn't want to lose her virginity this way, not here, with him, this goon, and that she had to get in under the shower. Half by accident, half on purpose, she turned it on and tottered into the freezing jet, gasping, nearly fully dressed, holding herself by the walls.

"Hey! Watcha *thing* you're doin', Syl? C'mon out od there, willya."

She fought him for a moment but he was, of course, far too strong for her. "I can't, I can't . . . I'd rather die," she moaned.

And "Ywon't die," he said.

She woke up on the bed, her slip in a roll at her waist, a taste of copper on her tongue.

Mark was leaning over the bed, whispering: "C'mon, geddup. Ged-dup, I tellya. We gotta clear the joint."

"Don't shake me."

She felt appalling. Her head was crystal agony. Her back itched. She seemed to be lying on stone. Wet stone.

"Mark . . ."

"I put a towel unnerya."

He was standing across the room, stripped to the waist, fastening his belt.

"Five minutes. What say, pigeon? Pow! Wake *up!* We on'y took a'room till twelve and I can' afford *trouble*, Syl."

"The witching hour," she breathed. Then, "Mark!" she exclaimed sharply in a tone so hopeless it surprised her. "Did you . . . was it good for you?" she completed abruptly.

"Yeah, yeah. All the way." His voice sounded edgy, at the extreme of exasperation. "Now what say we blow? Pop'll murder me if I'm not home soon, honest."

She tried to move. Head swam. Vision speckled. Oh, she shivered with pain. Cardboard, she felt constructed piece by piece of board. Ten little beetles were her toenails. There was a smell. Heavens.

"Now for Pete's sake don't start acting up. Look, I even put your skirt to dry." He pointed to an electric fire before which some of her clothes steamed. Then, why was it so cold in the room?

"I won't act up."

"Listen," he went on, "iss no good *lookin'* at me like that. You shouldna led me on inna *first* place if you din' wannit."

"I led you on?"

"Green light. You were *askin'* for it."

She said nothing.

"Let's move, lovebird."

"This is our youth," she said harshly.

He didn't hear her. He was rippling his muscles at himself in the mirror and for the first time she realized the desperately second-rate nature of her surroundings. In the same mirror, too, she saw his face, as if amputated, and presented on a platter, the wedge-shaped forehead studded with dilated eyes like some goonish looking-glass itself, or the pure blank of a TV screen.

"Well, I've been done." She tried to smile, turning on one side (*God, how her head hurt*). "Scripturally ravished. Served me right, I guess."

"Whadja mean, serve ya right?" He advanced angrily to the head of the bed. "Me, I laid out a lot of *stuff*, like real dough las' night. I'm telling ya, Syl. I don' *do* that for any dame. Whatcha thing I yam? I could of got me a pro fer half of that cash an' an'"

"Had a real workout, Markie?" She swung her legs effortfully over the bedside. Her stockings were in tatters.

"'Atsa girl." He looked pleased with her action. "Let's cop out quick, huh, dove. Fer a minute there I thought you was comin' babyface over me. Syl, you clear up—y'know—the *mess*, I mean?"

While she laid the towel to soak under the shower, Mark De Vayo combed his sideburns. She saw him. Over and over. It seemed endless. As she got dressed he flipped his deck of cards. His trousers hugged his ankles. Then he performed some quick squat-bends—"Jesus, but I'm in shape," she even heard him murmur. Already, she knew, he was embellishing the incident in his mind for its final retelling at the frat, where she herself would appear as a contortionist houri.

On the way back in the car he'd borrowed from his friend Roy, a Buick whose dashboard resembled some intergalactic control panel, his conversation centered almost entirely on the poor quality of the cafeteria butter and how he and some of the fellows at the house were planning to start an agitation about it next term—"Lousy stuff. It's that swindlin' manager. I like it *lightly* salted."

Before putting her off on the grimy Bronx sidewalk, he leaned across and kissed her cheek: "I giv' you a good time, Syl honey? Like I said, huh?"

Standing there alone a minute later Sylvia seemed to fight with her bag to find the key. But all she was able to unearth at first was a black glove, some Gold Bond stamps, and an ad for an Island-in-the-Sky Star-Laden Resort Haven in the Catskills. She wanted to laugh "wildly, hysterically," just as they did in Steinbeck or Saroyan, but she was too intelligent and self-conscious and inhibited. She let herself in and walked up the stairs. For the first time she noticed that one lens of her spectacles had cracked.

Horrible in tragedy, bawdy in comedy, Eros struck also during this period at the faculty.

Over at the Statler the MLA meeting was in full swing, if that were the right phrase for it. These meetings, attended by several thousand liberal arts professors, took place annually at different points across the country. Any one of them was interchangeable with any other and the dreariness of the rooms in which each was held, combined with the staggering mediocrity of the pontifical entities who attended them, really had to be seen to be believed. One thing was certain. Any creative individual experienced a complete death of the soul entering an MLA meeting. The relationship with the imagination was a wholly derogatory one. Exactly the same might be felt also in the paranoiacally gay parties that succeeded them, on this floor and that of the host hotel. No NAM Convention, even when described by John Marquand, could possibly have been more terrifying.

Digger Davies, that pint-sized cuckold who lived in anything but bliss, had spent a lonely day or so, nursing another vodka hangover and perfectly buried in papers. Having consented to tend the Department cat over the break, he had spent some time quieting and cleaning up after Julia, a very jumpy tabby. Every

now and then his wrecked eyes moved. His new D270 speaker was playing, complete with its 20-inch voice coil of edge-wound aluminium. He groaned expletively and struck his hairy chest. How could he get her back?

Two partially filled Martini glasses, one containing an almost symbolically withered olive, were what met his eye. That Dictets sylph. Their last meal together here had consisted of a few sherried oysters, bluepoints sprinkled with wheat germ and washed down with supreme of Scotch (*were* oysters an aphrodisiac?). He wandered into the bathroom, discovered a ring of hair in the tub, a cigarette circled with lipstick in the soap dish, one guillotined girdle on the shower rail, and a towel monogrammed THIS IS PAT! Digger felt a Czar-like weariness, a *taedium vitae* so penetrating he even looked up to see what was going on at the moment over at the Statler. His whole apartment was singing to him *Cuckoo!*

Well, apart from Roman on enigmatic references in Akenside, there was Lorenzo on Taos or Meilberg on Eliot's "*indebtednesses*." The last merited a moment's reflection. A fox smells its scent, went the saying, and just as the eager liberals of the thirties were now the loudest to denounce the "red infiltration" of the colleges, so English departments across the country sniffed searchingly at soupçons of plagiarism. It was obsessive with some, and pathological with Ned. For this reason *The Waste Land* bemused so many into an attitude of respectful fascination. How the hell did Eliot *get away with it*, in short? There'd been articles practically proving plagiarism in the authorized version, right?

So Ned Meilberg was of those who never tired of writing on Eliot's *drawings* from sundry originals. Their students were warned with thundering brows against such practices, of course. And if one of the latter objected with a shrug, "'At was the way Shakespeare worked the soil, ain't it?" he was grimly admonished—"Before the law of copyright, I'm afraid." Thus the warnings boomeranged, the students being shown lines lifted from modern originals in a manner that would have been called dis-

gracefully illegitimate if they'd done the same. They came to consider it mostly a matter of being caught out; in any case, in a city like New York, what did cheating really mean at all?

Scratching his strong nose, Digger freely admitted that the majority of learned articles grinding their ways through the presses of this or that unheard-of review were really a clever rosary of quotations, all indefatigably acknowledged and strung together on the thread of some deviously spurious (though gloatingly manipulated) argument. Recent biographies, clubbed and digested, had on examination, he'd found, consisted of compilations of other people's data, plus the steady accrual of "source material" cribbed from other sources. The whole built up into a devastating monolith, "a triumph of scholarship" and "a testimony to the vitality of American letters" as such would be glossed in *The Nincompoop Review*. Anyway, Digger no longer cared; he was desperate for Genne.

So he strolled, faint with frustration, through the crowded Statler corridors, passing the publishers' stands, the groups of scholars "in" this century or that. Someone was anguishedly lecturing on the semicolon in Samuel Butler. An ex-Japanese was deftly reading the same article he read at every MLA, merely adding a few marginal emendations annually and, of course, changing the title. Sure enough, through another half-open door, he saw Ned Meilberg's muzzle moving as he decimated the ubiquitous O.M.—"Lattimore, the Rosenbergs, Hiss . . . !" In the adjacent railway waiting room an extremely disturbed and subsidiary Lesbian Thomist from Berkeley, a woman who made him think of a social worker from the Low Countries, was indulging in a mouth orgasm over Sir Thomas Browne. Ech! How posterity would guffaw over this. Cuckoo! cuckoo! it all sounded to Digger, and his fists bunched despairingly.

Half blundering, half wandering, he entered a gloomy ballroom (what balls could have taken place here?) to listen to a Duke authority on early Doric discuss "The Structure of Eyrbygja Saga." Approximately twenty lonely figures clustered round

the foot of the stage of this gaping auditorium. And even they, Digger soon discovered, could have learned little about the saga since the white-haired speaker, unused to addressing a microphone, was pouring his coruscating oratory into a lamp.

The whole thing was so inaudible and unspeakable that Digger, moving off, felt appallingly lonely. And now he was beginning to feel giddy. A hollow scooped and tore at him inside. He swallowed several times. Was it all too late? Was there nothing else he could do in life, was he eternally condemned to this new no-exit? Why should he listen to these unpronounceable people? Nearly all their addresses demanded, in any case, the kind of concentration he was only prepared to spend, at this stage of his life, on intelligent pornography, or decent indecency.

Glancing at his program he saw that a well-known English Cyrillist was speaking on Pope. Was there hope on Pope? Digger drifted in. But this guy, who had on a dinner jacket and at least spoke dramatically, was another famous creeper after place, like dear old R. J. C. He'd begun as a review man, handed from the weeklies to *The London Magazine*, and from *The Sunday Licksplittle* back to the weeklies once more. The genus now exported, since not everyone could write for *The Observer*, and the connoisseurship of bread and butter in Chelsea was growing costly these days. Worse, there wasn't too much British Council left. The terrifying thing was they all seemed to be able to write novels. Digger listened for a while, his own face wearing the look of a man examining his handkerchief after blowing his nose. What the fellow said wasn't entirely without interest but, so far as Dig was concerned, he knew that at Lincoln the Cyrillist, *mutatis mutandis*, would be absolutely bloody useless. At Lincoln you dealt with the *tabula rasa* of the city high school, with the void of Bronx Science. A fool like Phipps ought to stay in England, naturalize and get a knighthood. Briefly Digger imagined the man over his morning paper in London now. What treats in store for him *there*? John Betjeman sobbing over his

teddy bear, the memoirs of Cecil Beaton, Raymond Mortimer *every Sunday?* He wandered out.

He was growing increasingly hopeless. Yes, he knew now he would give witness for Orrin Bunch—whatever he'd done, however he'd acted. The foul deed was almost certainly political and the savage irony was that in actual fact the curriculum of the average city college was largely Marxist anyhow: for the teaching of history as a matter of cause and effect came to apply to all studied, in the sense that every subject was considered solely under the beacon of progress. It was all study, thus, of technique rather than meaning. The latter could regress.

Out of the corner of an eye he was surprised to catch sight of Axel Maine keeping company with a rubicond Chaucerian, the English Chairman of a small college in Ohio.

"Ax!" he called, but his colleague either didn't hear or preferred to ignore. Professor Maine on the prowl, then? A better place for Beth, probably. But then no one ever left Lincoln, except for cemetery or jail.

Every now and then, striving to forget the ache, the *amor de lonh*, of his lost Genne in these disconsolate corridors, or plowing from some relief in the nearest bar, Digger burbled into men he had done graduate work with, or subsequently run into at various professional or semiprofessional gatherings. During meetings such as these a reciprocal snobbery went on. The Ivy League don, whose chief concern might be that he hadn't made some final club at Harvard, looked down socially on anyone teaching at Lincoln (the less secure the status of the smaller institution the more the condescension made itself apparent). And of course there were times when even Digger considered that quite a fair percentage of his colleagues would be happier shining shoes, that the real role in life of someone like Ned Meilberg, say, was to supply an automatically tabulated number of gallons of gas per diem. (Dammit, he did so figuratively, Digger lamely bantered to himself.) On the other hand, these condescensions could misfire. Lincoln sported a Count in its Romance Department and

an erstwhile ex-Cossack ex-dancer in German, to say nothing of a sometime diplomatic attaché in Economics. Reciprocally, even the sloppiest Linc prof knew that these lip-pursing nonentities from "New Haven" and the like were getting just about half their own salaries and that, despite the baggy tweeds and mock-courtly manners, what most of these self-satires were chiefly after anyway was bread—a bigger house, and second car, and St. Mark's for the infant at large in the yard.

All the same, mused this maddened Digger, threading through the unhappy corridors and bumping into this or that fellow guildsman of the graduate bench, such men had become non-colleagues now. They lived in a totally different world, a less thwarted one of pine-needled paths, and eggnog parties, and little towns with local inns and chiming doorbells opened by tweed-shorted daughters or boys with glasses of Kool-Aid who had come from climbing trees in jet helmets. Remembering Genne, suddenly and brutally Digger Davies cursed. "Christ on fucking crutches!" he cursed. Two Associate Professors turned, and smiled on him gently.

The little gamecock nearly spat where he stood. His mouth felt full of bile. He was swaying badly. Let them ossify in their split-levels, with all their vomiting children, and arrangements for picnics. Bumping into things, he went out. McGanley's Pizza Tavern the place was called. Digger cascaded in ("Enjoy your trip?" cawed some drunken joker), after much wandering nowhere. Ach, it was hopeless. The barman avoided his eye.

"I want a pizza," Digger eventually bawled at him.

The man made menacingly along. "What the hell are you talking about, bub?" He seemed to speak in a cold fury, entirely excessive for the occasion.

"I said I'd like a pizza. Please."

"Where the hell you think you are?"

"In a pizza tavern, that's where."

"Oh you do, do you?"

"Yes, I do, I do."

"I get it. A *wise* guy, huh."

"A hungry guy. With anchovies, would you. Tabasco pepper."

"*Listen*, Mac, I don't know just where the hell you. . . ."

The silly *tu quoque* showing no signs of concluding, Digger stuck two dollar bills on the counter.

". . . want that I call a cop, mister," the man was saying.

"You style this place a Pizza Tavern, don't you?"

"Or we can chuck you out ourselves. Either way you want it, it's *okay* with me."

"Look. Do you or do you not . . . what I mean is, you make pizza pie, don't you?"

"*Sure* we do. Whaddya think we are?"

"*Gimme one!*" roared Digger, nearly crying.

"Then, why the hell didn't you say so in the *first* place?"

"Oh drop dead, would you." But the man had vanished, to bell through a hatch. Digger took his sodden bills and sat down in what in Dublin would have been called a snug, with swinging doors and all. After ten minutes a Jewish waiter brought him steak and chips plus a glass of pale ale.

"An' I hopes you're after liking it noice an' rare, sir. A sirloin all the way from sunny Texas, just."

"Exactly what I wanted," Digger answered gravely. "Thank you so much."

He ate and drank. From where he sat he could see the set. He could hear the voice, and even get the words. But the words didn't make sense. The sense didn't make set. The voice didn't match the mug. The mike didn't touch the vice ("Hit him! Hit him! Hittim *again!*"), what kind of trick *was* this anyway? He suddenly felt white with funk, got up and left. A cab took him back. To his empty apartment. There he reread a letter Genne had once written him from France. He was desperately trying to believe in something. But it didn't help. Fundamentally it didn't begin to help.

Digger stared round the room at his underwater harpoon, wrist depth gauge, rubber suit. All waiting ready. But now she

never would. He knew that. And with a conscious contemplation—that “irony” so beloved of the New Criticism—he gazed his last at the oxygen tank there. Then in final despair he wrote a note, sealed, addressed and stamped it for the City Council for Municipal College Education. Lastly he ripped open a package from the cleaner’s, took the plastic bag off a sweater, stuck his head in it and tied some string round his throat. There was a moment of struggle. Neurotically knowing, Julia mewed. The Autopsy Surgeon pronounced death due to asphyxia, cerebral anemia, and shock. The lungs revealed some subpleural petechial hemorrhages. Digger’s last letter read as follows:

I resign you pigs!

I resign from the face of the earth because of the monstrous manner in which you have degraded an individual worth twenty of you. I refer to Professor Bunch, late of Lincoln College. I hate and detest, individually and severally, your lousy gory guts and herewith confer upon you the hon degree of N.B.G. (*No Bloody Good*, in the British, pals). If only your conspued Council were funny, or even faintly ornamental, I might perhaps simply be satisfied by turning you in to Our Lady of Sorrows for your *horribilità*.

In any case may you all be slammed, crammed and jammed into the great gun on Battery Park (near the U. S. Barge Office, you know), and the gun fired into the devil’s arse and you all be farted into Hell to fry frightfully in . . . think of me think of me often I died detesting you with unpunctuated tears And for one like me. . . .

Seven

Before anyone properly knew it, least of all the English Department, exhausted from correcting examinations and checking over cheating, the new term had got under way at Lincoln. The second semester of this brilliant academic year had begun on about the right note with Sigmund Fleisch rushing ten minutes late into the wrong classroom, Göttingen scarf a-trail, and teaching a History 5. Since Sigmund never called his roll, no one had known the difference until some questions at the end of the hour.

The city colleges had long found it impractical to have any sort of intersession break, since such only encouraged the students to go out and get jobs, for which they would have to lie about their ages and be exploited as only such sweatshop material could be in New York. For the few days' rest most of the professors simply sat at home, gasping like stranded fish. Only R. J. C. managed to pop off, down to the West Indies this time, tab taken by a girls' glossy for which he would, on return, write a travel article of an emptiness amounting to legerdemain. Most teachers simultaneously turned in their grades and collected their new class cards with the dreaded 5's in one corner, cocked a New Year's snook at the statue of Einstein, and pitched right in to the job of getting the Spearmint out of the ears of yet another vast assemblage of resentful Intro to Lit students, all of whom wanted to be the first to land a man on the moon.

It was perhaps only when the second week or so had started that the tenor of the palace revolution in their midst sank in. Enoch Hill, for instance, who had not voted for Mesrob, had been allotted 7 A.M. and 9 P.M. classes in the subbasements of remote Schweitzer Hall. Since he was a Hastings-on-Hudson commuter any chance of home life during the week was totally wrecked. More punitive assignments began to be taken cognizance of. And those enemies Mesrob did not keep hanging around from the first to last class he assigned to the salt mines, which dead Digger had once promised in store for those of the younger men who failed to get their own candidate in the Chair. The salt mines meant late evening school teaching in which, if possible, the students were even more tired after their days in offices and kiosks and even more hostile to anything so unnecessary as literature.

To an outsider it might parenthetically appear evidence of an odd power situation that Mesrob Mins had been able to pick his victims for punishment with such precision. How on earth, for example, did he *know* that Enoch hadn't voted for him during that last meeting in Convocation Room? Since the ballot had been secret, how in heaven's name did he have any inkling of who had voted for him or who hadn't?

The answer was simple, and known to all. The ballot wasn't secret. Sure, each member tossed a picturesquely folded slip of paper into R. J. C. Phipps's curly-brimmed bowler or Paul Kristoff's Rex-Harrison deerstalker which the tellers took smilingly round. The trick was that the Chairman *appointed the tellers* and took good care to call only on those of his disciples who knew the handwriting of every member perfectly, through intra-Departmental correspondence concerning communal funds, pension, hospital and insurance schemes, gift presentations, the like. At the start of that meeting Katzman had nominated two *trusties*. The thing couldn't be 100 percent, of course, since certain members disguised their writing, but it was surprising how closely it worked out owing to the fact that large blocks were sure voters

one way or another. For the rest the tellers did the best they could, watching what kind of pen (ball-point or nib) the more dubious members used, taking time reading out the votes, and if possible pocketing the most suspicious samples for later scrutiny. So, on the whole, Katzman had known his supporters and, handing over to Mesrob, hadn't at the time seen why his successor should be denied the courtesy of this initial information. One member, the Old Norse expert, in fact, had been given such an unscrupulously vitriolic spring program for a Full Professor that he'd retorted with a medical slip. Sorry, couldn't make those hours. Mustn't hurry over meals. Incipient ulcer. Doctor's orders. In accepting this so obviously fake excuse, Mesrob showed some skulking admiration for the man, if anything; certainly Katzman, when apprised of it, did. The action showed that hard, self-interested efficiency which alone succeeded in the civil services, so that even the craggy-browed rookie Chairman felt like a father whose errant son refused to cry out under the strap.

Naturally, too, the favoritism was evinced in the other direction, among the few more advanced courses the Department offered. Mac Hamrin, a voter for, now found himself, horn-rims hard a-dangle, teaching a Milton course in the seventeen-year-old custody of a Full Professor, currently retired to Remedial English Two. For a pathetic handout of "electives"—viz. approximately two or three courses outside the crash-missile programs —were given to the student's own selection in his senior year at Lincoln, in the belief that this might leave him with an idea he'd had—to quote from a dozen Deans—"a democratic learning experience." The male marvels of the labs and electrons usually "elected" Art 451—"Drawing from the Model." (Actually registration had caught up with this gismo and was urging the Art Department to utilize either male models or women so hideous they would have made Count Frankenstein cat; in turn, the Art Department, tickled to death by its enrollment showing, was fighting back with free coeds and had already, thanks to the contest in *Eagle*, made indirect, dulcet overtures to Fitz.) Others,

especially those who found it essential to maintain averages and who also worked part time in East Harlem groceries, selected Spanish 48—"Elementary Conversation (from 'The Opera House' to 'Crossing the Andes')."
Further favorites for electives included: Social Science 396x—"Field Work in Marriage (An opportunity for observation and participation in actual field situations for qualified students)"; Ed 209 MF—"Film Forum"; Dance 139—"Social Dance." Meanwhile the ladies also liked to elect Cookery 103—"Meal Management (This course is a practicum in entertaining in the home)." So when Mesrob called a meeting, the atmosphere was tense. The rumor had got around that their sympathies were to be enlisted in the dismissed professor's support, with which group endorsement Mesrob would ride triumphant over Chancellors, Comptrollers, Borough Presidents, State Senators and the like to the office he evidently coveted. One amazing notion. Convocation Room was full. In fact, the meeting went down in history as the Bunch bonanza.

"Will the mitting of the Deputtment per-please come to order."

His coat contused with chalk, Mesrob scowled grandiloquently in front of them, hair flowing over his collar.

"We will all ess-ess-stand in memory of the late Dr. Davies."

Ponderously they did so, while the Secretary read into the minutes an already agreed eulogy. At the back, sensitive Sigmund Fleisch was especially unnerved by the manner in which Digger's suicide had gone practically unnoticed in the new term. It was the penalty for that lack of social fraternization common to the city colleges, he acknowledged, but it was hard all the same, close on callous to him. No one spoke of Dig, a substitute had easily been hired, the fellow was already forgotten. Since he hadn't published any books the following was what Mac Hamrin gravely read out now:

The Committee on Committees suffered a grievous loss during intersession by the passing of Dr. Davies, inasmuch as he was so knowledgeable in his sphere and always of the greatest assistance in the Committee's deliberations.

There was a brief debate over the use of the causal conjunction and that was that. Such was Digger's official end as far as the City of New York was concerned. What happened to his wife, if anything, was none of their business at all. A death benefit under the 55-30 coverage would be paid Genne. *Soit.*

First item on the agenda was another entry in minutes, read with some perplexity by the Secretary, commenting on the great success of the latest Mayoral delegation to the college.

"In particular the Department's own unique contribution to the whole should not be belittled, while. . . ."

The emptiness of phraseology achieved a sort of schizoid sublime and, as Hamrin resumed his seat, all enthusiastically applauded. No one was even aware this time the Mayor had visited. He, or some Honorable Someone-or-other, was always doing so, seeing how city students "*followed the gleam.*"

Next came the business of the late, pre-Julia Department cat, presently interred in front of the statue to Einstein. It was a matter as to who paid the funeral expenses (borne so far out of funds), whether a memorial were desirable, so on. Officially, in Norwell Cramm's opinion, at any rate, the cat came under Facilities and he, for one, speaking as you might say a lone individual, that was, with all the, ah, due respect for the views and wishes of all other individuals present, whatever their views, you might say, had in no way (he felt) authorized the employment of a man to dig nor (and he wanted to make this clear) the subsequent purchase of any plaque thereafter.

When Norwell had finished his periodic pluperfects Roman was off on a very satisfactory series of double negatives, the general gist of which turned out to be a plea for the Buildings and Grounds Committee to deal with the matter. Enoch opted for the Sub-Committee on Stahrnding and Estahrblishment to settle the affair. Another the Office Committee. So on. It was all coming to resemble so many other English Department meetings that the younger men began exchanging glances. When R. J. C. walked in.

Hard at work this semester substituting comment for criticism on his TV show, Professor Phipps had on Melton Mowbray slacks above shoes of chocolate suede, a jacket of giant check supplied with hacking vents (though he had never sat a horse), and a flourishing mess for a tie. His brow still carried the tinge of teak and, as he sat down in front, it contracted conspicuously, the only outward and physical sign of the inward and spiritual cares of this quite remarkable man.

“Sorry to be late,” he was heard to say, in a voice pregnant with the responsibilities of many “well-turned” reviews, “but the club”—such being how he referred to the book remainder operation he juried—“the *club* took some time deliberating their choice.”

Harvey Spiller whispered to Hoyd—“Faith Baldwin or Grace Livingston Hill, want a bet?”

Hoyd smiled round sarcastically, rubbing the first finger and thumb of his right hand together: “Don’t you wish you could *touch* that tweed?”

It was a staged entrance, they all sensed that. For the rumor was growing that Rather Jolly Clever would succeed to the Presidency the following term. He was miles more likely to do so than Mesrob, of course. And he had of late been seen fairly constantly in the company of Dean of Students Grudin and lavishly lunching other influential members of the administration. A “second groan” shuddered the Department at thoughts like these.

One or two minor items arose. They were dealt with via a sort of paronomasia, or due process of Parkinson’s Law, that is, the more negligible the matter the more time was spent on it. Yet finally, despite the virtually feudal circumlocutions of their proceedings, there really did at last seem nothing else on the agenda. At which point Mesrob rose to his towering five feet four.

With scorching punctilio their Chairman began: “In ver-view of the s-s-statement issued in regard to Professor Bunch’s hearing at the end of February, I should most like to hear a motion we collectively en-nen-nen,” as ever, when excited, Mesrob’s Stein-

stutter rose to the proportions of dada, "hen-dorse a Departmental testimony to reinstate him at once."

No one said anything at all.

"Do I so hear a mer-motion?" He added a gibber to the effect that it was to safeguard the "mer-most unimpeachable record of his fine character."

Even if he hadn't gone far too far, he had approached it all wrong. Mesrob was dealing with men who—however distantly—were still scholars, not Army subordinates. They sat tight.

"Der-does anyone so move?"

Mesrob was turning the violent color of R. J. C.'s tie.

"I so move," he snorted at last, an heroic disdain pouring from his lofty brow.

Silence.

"Second?"

"Can the Chair propose?" asked one mild voice.

Mesrob spat it again—"Second?"

Ned Meilberg was seen to shift in his seat and a barely audible murmur began, "Hiss, Miss Bentley, Corliss Lamont. . . ." Was there a whinny from one fairy at the back?

Anguished as much by his own exhibition as anything Mesrob's lips twitched convulsively in the ensuing silence. Cowards! his eyes blazed at them—*Cowards!* But they didn't budge. Suddenly, very red in the face, Axel Maine stood up.

"I second," he said.

"Students for Sane," hissed Meilberg, rather faster now, "why, it's well-known that. . . ."

"Second," shouted Axel again.

As he sat down a slow voice from the front said, "Don't be a fathead. The Chair can't make a proposal. There's nothing before this meeting now."

They bowed their heads. This was extremely embarrassing. Nothing quite like it had been known in the Department before.

"That we all wer-will, will all collectively present ourselves as character witnesses for Professor Bunch." Mesrob fairly flamed it

at them. No one moved. "Before, if necessary, the mer-most hex-treme official bodies. Before the Special Unit of the State Commission of Investigation."

There was a prolonged silence, then a member near the door left, looking at his watch.

"Who comes forward?" called the Chairman.

After another pause two members advanced from roughly the center of the room and Mesrob glared at them passionately. However, these two professors did not direct their steps toward the table, they left by the ornate doors also. Gradually others started filing out.

"This mitting," Mesrob hurled at them hysterically, "cannot had-journ until I ser-ser-so. . . ."

But this time he'd miffed it—in the term used by a very pained Lorenzo some days later. The gathering dissolved, with or without sanction of the Chair, it wasn't certain which; for at first Mesrob shrieked shibboleths at those leaving (some implausibly muttering, "Sorry, class in Schweitzer"), then he passed to a silent simplicity, like a saint in a stained glass window, and from there he "moved" for adjournment in a departed gasp at bewildered, pen-poised Hamrin. A splendid performance to the finish, but it boded ill.

How ill only became apparent in the following weeks. Item. No outside calls were tolerated in future on college phones. Switchboard had strict instructions to report. Item. No Professor was permitted to assign or in any way *use* one of his own text-books in class, except by special permission of both the Chairman and the newly constituted Board of Ethics, established over all city agencies by the Board of Estimate.

Finally, Item. Any member "failing to report for *duty*," to cite Mesrob's martial prose, brought with him on resumption a doctor's chit, plainly signed. And *in triplicate*.

Still, it all remained initially innocuous. A passing eccentricity. The boat was rocking some but the crew could "muddle through." Mesrob was merely taking himself more seriously than anyone,

outside his wife, ought to; he'd get over it. It would wear off in time. After Orrin's hearing.

Then one morning the Department learned differently. A notice was posted on the bulletin board. In the name of the Chair it requested signatures of members who would appear as witnesses for Bunch at his coming hearing, now postponed to March by Albany. Everyone was urged both to sign and to donate five dollars for an ad in *The New York Times*. But peremptorily. As no one yet knew precisely what the efficient but evidently misguided Professor Bunch was being accused of by the powers-that-be, and as this new directive demanded endorsement of more than his character, the page remained virgin. For three full days. On the fourth the signature of brave Axel Maine appeared at the top. It was the only one.

Then it was heard that Mesrob had put personal pressure on the expert on Old Norse to sign. This fairly easygoing prof, whose eye was now more firmly fixed on pension percentiles (non-Clancy coverage) and the "death-gamble" law than the Sturlunga Saga, declined and absented himself for a day on genuine account of acute diarrhea. But he was supposed to be suffering from an *ulcer*. It made Mesrob, no more than half-educated medically, hopping mad. On return the next morning from his "stomach upset" the Norseman found himself summoned by his Chairman who, all saturnine scowl and flying hair, had called out "March in!" when the convalescent prof had smiled at the door. The latter had then been informed that he was docked a day's pay unless he could produce a medical slip in excuse.

The flabbergasted Full Professor hadn't taken Mesrob seriously at all, even jokingly jumping to attention in front of the desk, and saluting. Mesrob was much junior to him in rank in any case. He explained the nature of his indisposition merrily enough. Of course he hadn't consulted a doctor; it was only a matter of a good dose and a day away from school. He even punned on school and stool and made some academic crack about the need for a tighter sphincter in future. But when at last he realized that

unsmiling Mesrob was in earnest, he was staggered—and hotly challenged the legality of the procedure altogether.

Mesrob retorted with some dusty “absolute right” vested in the Chairman concerning “emergency regulations and recommendations relating to salary” which could “at any time” be made to the Council via the President. The long and short of this was that the injured professor knew that any report, of any sort, to CCMCE (let alone one of “most reprehensible der-der-dereliction of duty”) might have dread repercussions at this stage of the game. The very last thing you could afford in the final phases of the “Demand” Retirement Law of 1959. Who, on that board of city politicians with their slept-in faces, would back his position after the President had been got to rubber-stamp the matter? The risk for the Old Norse expert was far too great. He had given in. The recommendation had gone through. No one had challenged it. Somewhere, deep in the oubliettes of the city’s officialdom, someone had wearily initialed the memorandum, stuck it in his ~~out~~ tray, where a somniferous steno had taken it for action to the Payroll Division’s drab subsection dealing with higher teachers and lower firemen, and money had been withheld on pay-day. When it had, the Department had at last been waked up. Moreover, others in other Departments learned of the stoppage and were amazed. Nothing like it had been known on campus before. Was it constitutional? If it had been passed through Payroll, it had to be. Pray God it never happened to them.

Hoyd Rushzak heard of the news shortly before a class in Salem. His informant was swarthy Axel, strutting up and down before the office door.

“And now everyone in the Department but me,” Hoyd’s friend was looking more hustled than ever as he dispensed the information, “has to render a complete record of the exact number of class quizzes, tests, and pop papers he’s assigned so far this term. He’s left me out because he thinks I *obeyed* him. I resent that.”

“You mean, because you signed to stand witness for Bunch?”

“Evidently. And don’t imagine that in his present mood Mes-

rob will be above checking on us through our students. Anyone failing to report will be guilty of 'conduct unbecoming.' Says so on the bulletin board."

Hoyd cleared *Mechanics of Expression* off a chair. He was in an Eliot mood today. He seemed about to speak, then gave up, wagging his head with a smile.

"Hell, we've got enough to do without this tomfoolery," the other continued. "I've quizzed my Intro to Lit only once this term. Do you know how many I have in it? Exactly eighty-three." Axel thumped Hoyd's desk. "Eighty-three thirsters after learning who think the first great Western philosopher was named Harry Stotle."

"And the only homers those theoretically struck by the Yankees," said Hoyd with a laugh that came out like *Dayadhvam*. "I know. I agree. But look, Ax, I have a class."

"Sorry. Just wanted to tell you this favoritism's none of my asking. The thing's preposterous. Our Department's fast becoming the laughingstock of the campus. Personally, I think he's going nuts."

And Axel Maine fussed off. Hoyd sat thinking, breathing tightly, the last word knelling in his head. What did they do if the Chairman went mad? *Went* mad? There'd been moments lately, he had to admit, when the man seemed to be going out of his mind all right. But so far as Hoyd was aware there was no provision in the bylaws. They were stuck with Mesrob for the statutory four years now. Unless he died. *Wait a minute!*

He stole a glance at his watch. A new text this term, one a carroty salesman had assured them would "wrap up" beautifully. It was full of the sort of charts and diagrams that scientific students admired. Hoyd noted the publisher, ubiquitous Williamson McNeery, and wondered how that kid's script was faring in the house. Carol Something-or-other. Purple ink and Petrarchan penmanship. He took a few final puffs and doused his pipe.

Limping into Salem some minutes later he knew he wouldn't sign for Orrin. That tough ex-professor was able to fend for him-

self, if ever anyone was. He had about the best lawyer in the world, and his own utter removal from the scene of the disaster somehow betokened a kind of power. Or so thought Hoyd, wondering whether the man had really got mixed up in some rather odd political hanky-panky unknown to them all. And by now other plans were forming under the Rushzak fuzz. He had an *idea*, a domestic solution that had come to him watching the Ionesco nonsense with Marlene that night. Her hand hot in his. He wondered if he ought to return that thirteen-year-overdue book to the library first. Permanent retention of city property. Committee on Trusts and Gifts. Statute of Limitations? Could be awkward. About to walk in through the classroom door, Hoyd observed a small figure hunched on iron steps in the darkness beyond it. Some exhausted scientist, he thought, rather like those wretched English infants of the early nineteenth century too fagged out to move from their benches at the end of day. Then all at once he recognized the flowing golden hair, the noble brow.

"Mesrob!" he exclaimed. "What on earth are you up to here?"

The Department Chairman got stiffly to his feet and came forward staring at his watch.

"Most urgently concerned, Hoyd, about per-punctuality within the Deputtment. You have half a minute. I am distinctly gratified."

Hoyd frowned. "You mean, you were checking up to see I got here on time."

"Am going to have s-s-seriously to consider," Mesrob replied with eyes averted, "inst-tit-tituting *correctional* measures for those mer-members arriving late for class. We expect punctuality of s-s-students," he cried, casting a tempestuous glance, plus a flattening gesture, at two late loons who panted past. "*Punk-tuality*." He put spleen into the word. "Ter-teachers coming repeatedly late to class will be assigned to work in registration at the start of term. And by the way, Hoyd, that Library fer-fine you in-

curred. Don't let it actually happen again this term. Our faculty should set constantly an example."

The bell jangled overhead. Mesrob swung and left. Hoyd scratched his crewcut skull. Christ God Almighty. Was this really happening? To work in registration, if Mesrob could make such a mad threat stick, was a punishment equivalent to the Papal galleyes. Registration was the grimmest time of all in the city colleges and to work at it meant cutting two weeks out of your summer. And if you taught summers, as Hoyd usually had to . . . and the library! He realized they must have been instructed to report all books returned late from English faculty to the Chairman. Amazing! For a second Hoyd contemplated the idea of spending the whole of his life in an effort to refute the few learned articles Mesrob had ever written, academically—in other words—wringing his neck. He turned to the class. It was some minutes before he could concentrate. Poor devils, it was the end of day and this was a group so beat that for them death would have been a promotion yet. Hoyd started shouting.

Outside the classroom window Axel heard his voice, as he himself walked to his double-parked Volks. He saw the last students plugging the meters, putting the fake tickets under their wipers, before racing back to class. Indeed, this semester *The Eagle* was campaigning for a longer break between periods simply for the students to have time to switch their parking places. *The Eagle*. Half-huffily he thought of Sylvia Hantmann. Why did she attract him so? Was she Armenian?

Active Axel hustled home, livid with tension, on his brief legs, to let off steam to Beth. Only the Brigadier had been there, hopelessly outstaying his welcome as usual, and he heard his son-in-law's fulminations with a smile of growing approval. Beth's father was not a clever man and had not the slightest wish to be thought so. His eyes wandered over his son's dark, tough head to a vision of barracks, an Adjutant on a verandah, the tucked cots in their rows . . . *the stuff to give 'em*. One steel-tipped

heel drummed the floor as Axel fumed on; above the toothbrush bristle the face reddened slightly, and when his son-in-law lit up his first Martinis he said slowly, "Well m'boy, you'll all have to *take your medicine.*"

"What do you mean?"

"This Mins is *in command.* A disciplinary measure. . . ."

"Naturally, the course assignments," quavered Axel, striving to show fair, "you can't state definitely they were loaded. But that pay subtraction, why that was incredible. As a matter of fact, one of the fellows went in to see Mes to ask if it was punitive, and he was informed that in fact it was, absolutely."

"So he marched in, did he," commented the Brigadier in an even more satisfied manner. "That's in order. You can always *state a complaint.*"

Over the fourth beaker of flavored gin Axel voiced fantasies of resignation. "I'm in the wrong job," he growled, "and you know it. So does Beth. You never liked me teaching at Lincoln from the start. Nor Beth living in New York." Yet he himself knew he'd gone too far by now to change, all those years on his Fud, there wasn't any turning back.

"This man was *absent without leave,*" mused the Brigadier in the same fulfilled tone. "You say he had no doctor's chit. Now he must *face the music.* Mins sounds like a good fellow to me. You see, the fellow was absent. Come to that, the charge might well have been of *misrepresentation.* I think I'd've had him in on that."

"Ye gods," said Axel suddenly. "It's hard enough to get anyone who amounts to anything to come and teach at an advanced high school like Lincoln. If wind of this sort of treatment gets around it'll be next to impossible."

"All the same you voted for him, I believe. You proposed the man."

"Wrong. Digger proposed him. I now propose to depose him," Axel concluded with a bloodcurdling grin, "monumentally." And after two more exchanges he strode out of the apartment.

At about the same time he did so Miss Wilmer placed the plastic cover over her typewriter in Calhoun Hall, and opened her bag for the eight or nine keys with which she had to lock up before leaving. She had just finished typing an extraordinary document which she now pinned to the Department Bulletin Board. It was headed **PHYSICAL FITNESS CAMPAIGN**. The various professors would see it on the morrow.

All these actions were completed calmly and considerately, without involvement on her part. Deftly the pretty steno watered the plants beside her desk. Then she went to the closet and put on her coat. Then she locked the files, the closets, the drawers, typewriters and stenciling machines. All in order? The well-named Croaker fire extinguisher had been checked. There she paused.

She could hear the sounds from the other side the door, the Chairman was still in his office, waiting to check on the punctuality of the Evening Session staff shortly coming in. At various moments throughout the day Miss Wilmer had heard him moving about, with buoyant step, humming to himself, opening files, shifting papers on his desk. Now and then strange noises had emerged, as if someone were running in the Chairman's office, or maybe (as she'd put it to a luncheon friend from the library staff) playing hopscotch with real Scotch. Once, factually, she had heard the words—"That'll make it hot for 'em!"

As she paused now, hand on handle, she could hear him stirring within. Somehow these were un-Chairmanly, speculative movements. Even, she caught a chortle. Doing so she shrugged and with a bright "Good-night, Professor Mins," she went quickly on her path for the Flushing BMT.

HOLLYWOOD STARLITES

By Lou Fielder

Betsy Phorm definitely assures me that Mogul Productions have signed a great new find in the Lincoln College Sophomore Fitzgeraldine Sullivan. After two months training in one of his Kitty-Kat

Klubs, Julius Niersteiner plans for her to star straightway in a patriotic picture to be filmed entirely in France. Meanwhile cameras are grinding on tests of the new sensation in the New York area while press-agentry is busy building up the appropriate Irish background for Miss Sullivan, who was in fact born in the Bronx. "Acting is feeling," says she. Seems like our finds are getting younger every season.

WILLIAM WIMPSHELL

From New Yoik

Tailpiece: in one fry-quented Bway niterie pallie told yrs truly Mogoiloinaire Julius Niersteiner is going to showcase the dimplin derriere (dear dear) of Fitzgeraldine Sullivan who is rapidly spanking the panties off all contenders in Lincoln College's Miss Superior Posterior contest—No gull this Mogul—Miss Fitz (buppa buppa) minced past that minute in stunning mink—a bag would sag in such glad rags—Love at First Smite for this showscribe—Never a man to take a back seat for nxxx, Julius says his find spells smasheroo \$ucce\$\$—plans to put her in pixcher about (smile) Madame Du Barri—and if Fitz simply ssstroll-l-l-lsss as she did past those Copertopers last night what a puformance that'll be—Bennett Cerf there with friend—Movieexec Julius claims he's never backed a bust and that the Day of the (R)ump-man is in—look for Fitz to Trendexterminate audiences real soon—if only a few more of the soft-on-Soviet comrats at Lincoln like Lenin-exProfessor Bunch would spend less time giving out Marx for marks and more riding escalators be-hind kids like Fitz they might see the End of their CPing and there'd be more she-nanigans and less red faces at that tax-supported institution for lower learning.

Gotham Ho! Ho! Top floppsicle! Limpwristers who accused PALice of brutality last. . . .

Ira Stern had decided to sack it early that night. As he slipped between the sheets in the Werner Von Braun housing project on the Lower East Side, he reflected that in all probability his friend Stan Schochet was at that minute entering his bed from the bottom, rather than from the side. (What, after all, was a *side*?) Maybe, indeed, there were even nights when Stan slept under his bed yet, instead of on top of it, just to surprise it.

Ira smiled. Before doffing his bifocals he stole a glance at the day's *Eagle*. The pixyish podex of a contender in what the fashion magazines had already dubbed the "back interest" comp pouted out at him—SUE LIBERMANN. *All's Well That Ends Well For—Miss GENEVA!* Ira's feelings about girls being what they were, he seldom spent time on this feature. Nor was it the sausage-casing tautness of those beshorted hillocks thrusting out of the picture that attracted him now, it was more a sentiment of fascinated fear. Was this due to his upbringing, and a mother who allowed no lights to be turned on Fridays or Saturdays? A year ago Ira had actually accompanied her with a pile of dishes to the Bronx River where, in the middle of the most mechanized century to date, they had solemnly fulfilled the proper rituals concerning flowing water. The bell rang.

Since his dad was enjoying a soirée at the North End Democratic Club, Ira rose to take it. George Liemen, Stanley Schochet, and Richie Weiss all burst in, more excited than these individuals normally were.

"We've decided to take in the dance in Templeton tonight."

"And when we say we, we mean you."

"I didn't even know there *was* a dance." Ira scratched a pyjamaed armpit, his tone concealing the fear that had slipped into his limbs at the fatal word. He had seen the coeds in curlers in Wino that afternoon and had appreciated why hairdressers were so often homosexuals. "You guys know perfectly well I never. . . ."

"Listen to the 'call of the wild' for once," advised Richie with a grin. It was clear these boys had been drinking.

"You're coming with us, sport."

"I'd love to but well, I've got a cold and it's snowing yet."

This excuse made even Stanley smile. "Surely you can dream up something better'n that."

Richie Weiss's owl-shaped face widened. "We neglected to tell you, Ira, we're making a mild detour to partake of some 'liquid courage' first."

"That clinches it then." But Ira knew he spoke with helpless defiance. "You know I gave up drinking ever since I tried that scientific experiment concerning alcohol with George."

"That was last half," said George, taking the last butt from the bedside Winstons. "C'mon, man."

Ira bit his lip. "That girl of yours coming, Stan? The one who wears her cigarette-holder behin' her ear like?"

"Carol? Nuh. She don' believe in dancing."

"Well, neither do I."

"Aw, c'mon, ol' man, y'said you would."

"I never said anything of the sort," Ira protested. But his question had been a concession, one grabbed by the others. A few moments later, clad in a true-blue suit, he was fixing a Geiger-counter tie clasp and adjusting a clean silk yarmelke. It was snowing hard outside. His father had taken the Minotaur.

So the three arrived in the vicinity of Lincoln after a half hour of the joys of New York's surface transit. On the way they chatted, chiefly uncovering some more "corruption in low places" (as Richie put it) in the local administrative setup. There was always a handful of Lincoln students who, year in year out, came up with various schemes to blow the city and/or federal payroll sky-high with scandal—cunnilinctus in the Post Office (discovered by a diligent dentist, no doubt), sodomy chez Catholic prep schools, fetishism at General Sessions.

"Is Fitz leavin' school, now she's famous?" Ira asked Richie as the bus hurled them out. Rich shook his balding pate.

"Staying on. The studio wants for her to win the can comp. She's got to. The publicity, I mean. They expect 'great things.' Madame Du Barry yet." But he spoke mournfully. "Jus' when I was making out with the horses, too. I took in eighty bucks last week, but that won't keep her in Kleenex the way the studio plan for their 'dream doll' to live now. Why, she won't even go up with me at Amityville any more, says it's beneath her dignity."

"Beneath! Howja *like* that!"

"After all those lessons I took, too." Then he proudly added, "Y'know, *Silver Screen* are doing her next issue."

"Yeah," said George Liemen skeptically, "well, I was with Fitz in high school. Her best subject was recess."

"Look, fellers," Ira broke in as they turned a familiar corner. But they half-tugged him over the snow into the bar. El Colosal had stickers advertising HOSEIRY and BILLARES in its windows, and their thatched table was damp. A wooden date palm did duty as coat rack.

"Wanna shoot me some more moneyballs, Rich?" Stanley inquired and, shaking his head, Richie told the others how he'd been creamed in Winey last "half."

George and Richie decided that the drink would be vodka and orange juice. "It won' make you throw up, sport," George informed Ira. "This vodka was endorsed by Harvey Breit yet."

Being a faithful Lincoln student George had of course evolved a *strictly scientific* method for their getting "happy" without actually finding themselves tanked. "Nine drinks in half an hour will get anyone 'high,'" Richie agreed, "without the unpleasant aftereffects so often associated with 'inebriation.'"

"Well, I'll have to see you home," Ira sulked.

The first screwdrivers arrived and Pedro, the barman, was in a generous mood. Tonight the boys looked loaded for sure.

"First round on me. I'm still 'in the money,'" cried Richie, and no one disputed his offer.

During the third (paid for by Ira) Richie got up. "They have a great record-player here, y'know it."

Before very long five rounds had gone down the hatches. The jukebox was blazing away and the whole place was pounding to an Irish song belted out by The Wallows. With a beatitudinously quizzical expression Richie was weaving to those foaming hues, while George smiled virulently.

"Looks as nine'll be one too many," Ira remarked.

On the floor Richie had straightened impressively. *The Irish Washerwoman*. His domelike forehead was pink and his eyes

had gone solemn under the heavy brows. "Ancestral blood," was what he bellowed at the ceiling.

He started to dance, grabbing a sign that said NO DANCING for his partner. Pedro came forward to remonstrate. While the argument was prolonging itself Stanley decided they ought to eat. It was then he noticed the man at whom Ira was staring. This individual had just clapped his hands for a waiter, too continental a gesture for El Colosal, and was getting ready to pay for his drinks.

"I had that guy for Intro to Lit," Ira said, peering through his bifocals at the cubicle. "Jesus, that's Professor Bunch."

"Who?" Stan asked.

"Professor Orrin Bunch. The spearholder who got kicked out the English Department for communism last half," George Lie-men explained.

By now Richie had gloomily returned to the table. Stanley ordered eggs.

"How you wan' figs done, sah?"

"One on one side and one on the other," retorted Stanley curtly.

The waiter bowed and went away. He never came back. They gazed at the distinguished head, above the cubicle wall.

"Sure," agreed Richie. "That's the guy was all the ribble about last term. Don't you fellers 'member reading about it in the 'ardent journalism' of *The Eagle*?"

"It can't be. What the hell's he doin' here?"

At that moment the impressive figure sidled from his table, turned adroitly and walked with a brisk gait for the door, glancing at his watch.

Ira stood up—"Professor Bunch?"

There was no doubt about it. The man stopped at the name, and turned, an expression of comatic pique upon his face. Then he smiled. "Enjoy yourselves, boys. Have a time." He added, "It's later than you think." Then he passed a hand over his eyes,

called to the waiter imperiously—"Slap down a round of *hard ones* for the boys. On Bunch." The doctor tossed a ten-spot on the bar, where it lay ignored by Pedro. Then he rose to his toes, glanced anxiously at his watch again, hurried out and off.

"Well, *whaddya* know?"

The waiter was gazing at the vacated table. There appeared to be about twenty dollars in a pile upon it. He stepped back, scratching his head. "Say who *wuz* that?" He spoke with exasperation. "Some kin' *wise-guy*?"

George Liemen got up for the jukebox, tried a spot of soft-shoe, sat down again quickly. He looked puzzled by the bump from his chair.

"We're high enough to take off," he stated; in fact, they felt good enough to fly. For the first time in his life Ira Stern was actually looking forward to meeting a chick or two at the ball. Richie wanted to stay. But he was outvoted, particularly by Pedro, the barman, who was by now threatening police action. Or some sort of action—"One day I keel you hombres . . . but not so nicely at all." Etcetera.

Outside it was extremely cold. It had begun snowing faster, heavy petals that daubed the faces of the four. They huddled together, stumbling down Nanset Avenue, laughing loudly. They got in through a South Gate tenanted by suspicious guards, then lost themselves inexplicably and indeed ended by shoving each other out another gate the far side of the campus some minutes later. Here a complex of Burns guards expressed themselves as glad to see them go and definitely advised against any attempts at reentry.

About sixteen strong cats, closely related in appearance, manned the alley into which they'd weaved. These thoroughbreds stood two hands high and were of the general stature of terriers. Richie realized they'd hit the area west of campus. He led them hospitably into Alpha Pi which proved unexpectedly empty. As his guests admired the latest stolen bus-stop signs,

handcuffs and old-time police helmets, he mixed them what he called Depth Bomb cocktails with the aid of coffee-dregs and rank rum. Then they set out for the campus again.

Now all prepared to woo and win for the first time in his life, Ira was receiving the kind of advice a coach crams into a football hero at the last minute—"Fire when you see the whites of their knishes, boy."

"Yeah, an' above all avoid the ones wit' the screwy names, y'know like Maryalice and Libbyanne."

"An' the kind that nearly faint when you ask 'em for a kiss."

"Boy," breathed Ira with indignation, "they're gonna *die* when they hear what I've got to say."

"Asha shpirit," Stanley crooned.

In fact, it was sozzled Stan who got them into the college. After two unsuccessful attacks on well-guarded gates they decided to climb in; but the campus walls were topped with Faustian spikes, musical-comedy gaffs, and bits of broken glass cemented in as only the New York City Parks Department can cement in such deterrents. What's more, the guards were armed and very very sober. It was Stanley who decided they should climb *under*. He chose the manhole and soon, slightly blackened, they were in the bottom corridor of a building whose walls kept bumping into them. Notices announced courses in the Analytical Aspects of Plane Trigonometry and Committees on the Development of Engineering Facilities; to these Stanley took some exception since they alphabetized down to CDEF, but clearly they were *home*. Once the floor got up and biffed Richie on the forehead. He sat discussing his lost Fitz with George Liemen.

"Whatta chicken," said the latter like a charm. "I mean, I dreamed I went camping in her Maidenform bra."

"Her merengue is the envy of the Dominican delegation yet."

"I can imagine, sport. She ought to draw Semele into orbit any minute now."

"I wish I could catch her in an 'off' moment," sighed Richie, tantalized by these hyperboles. "You know, like everything off."

"Let's go," said Ira, wiping his bifocals, and they went.

They succeeded in leaving the building, which turned out to be good old Salem, and were astonished at the cold desertion of the campus.

"Where are the 'gay festivities'?" inquired Richie lugubriously.

"And just where the hell *you* trying to go?" A broad-faced guard emerged from the darkness.

"To the dance in Templeton, whereja think?"

"There ain't no dance."

"But there's *gotta* be," Ira complained.

"Of course there is, old man." George spoke soothingly. "Get out of the way, you," he told the guard. "This is the Stern gang."

"Called off on 'count inclement weather," cracked out the latter. "Now beat it, you bums, or I'll turn you in to the Dean. Hey, come to think of it, ain't youse the guys we already. . . ."

Something in Stanley snapped at that. He hippity-hopped down to the lawn deep in snow. Before their eyes he started peeling off his clothes. Coat, shirt, shoes. "Jush leave me lay," he was heard to mutter in a final protest against English 1.

"Hey, cut that out," called the guard. "You crazy?"

Happily Stanley continued. Near-naked he took an ecstatic dive into the snow.

"*Cut it out, I said!*" roared the guard.

Ira and Richie exchanged glances. Even George appeared worried. Stanley was now whooping as he rolled. The guard gave a flying tackle, pinioned Stan's arms behind his back, straightened him with a slapping cosh on the rear.

"That was *much* too hard," called Ira.

"Break it up, willya."

The three onlookers rushed to assist. They relieved the snarling guard of their pal—"I'm turning you all in to the Dean. Let's get your names now. See your I.D. cards first. Here we go."

Sobered, shivering, they dressed Stanley who was clearly feeling, and had felt, no pain at all. When they had given in their names (George's Franz Kafka being instantly discounted), the

guard gave them personal escort to the drawbridge and the main gates out, a meaty mick, stiff-necked—and probably uncircumcized—Philistine, glad to see the last of these soot-smudged Kikuyu of Grand Concourse.

“Lesh go to a Bolodrome,” Stanley suggested. “Carol bowlsh for real. Bolorama.”

They discarded the idea out of court.

On the way back Ira lamented, “So it was all for nothing. Where’s the nearest Israeli sing? I never did get near a girl.”

“Yeah, yeah.” George Liemen’s arms were dangling like tubes beside him. “And jus’ to think, ol’ top. Y’might have got to kiss a goy arreaddy.”

“Sue?”

“*¿Con quién hablo?* Eddie! Justa *minute*, willya.”

Eddie Drosa waited ten, tapping on the credenza. He thought of Geneva’s passion-flower mouth and that backline to make La Ekberg bite her lip. Then came her purr again—“Surprised to find me in, love one?”

“Frankly, after a day’s Physics at Lincoln I’m surprised to find anyone anywhere. Tell me, kid, where were you all that time?”

“In the potty. Y’know, for the act.”

He knew, and understood. On more than one occasion by now he had assisted his pantherine girlbelle for her appearance at Raymond’s—not only the crushed ice to tense the nipples, but also the carefully whipped whites of two eggs applied underneath like an astringent, where it stiffened and kept the flesh tight (Susan Libermann scorned Scotch tape). And *welch’ ein Busen* yet! Jesus, her breasts were really *ruthless*, weren’t they? There’d already been moments when, surging on that queenly expanse, Eddie had felt as Captain Ahab must have, spreadeagled on Moby Dick.

“Say Sue, what you got on?”

“Nothing but the player, bird.”

“In other words you’re in the mink.”

“Right.”

“Well listen, what 'bout taking in a late-late-late show after your act? There's a new S-F running at the RKO's. I know you'd love it.” He thought of the Air Force getting set to blast off its moon rocket, the minute-men waiting with their microphones, and within himself he shivered.

But all she said was, “Oi. That'd be great. Swell. *Encantado, señor.*”

“So I'll pick you up at the club. Say, Sue?”

“Yep.”

“How 'bout going Dutch tonight?”

“Sorry, me no got my wooden clogs.”

“Velly funny. I suppose you'll want to bite first, you always do.”

“You think maybe I like food, Eddie?”

“Specially in ya stomach, louse.”

“Let's see. Maybe I'd like *grab* a coupla rattlesnake kidneys to start with. Diamond rattlers, of course.”

“Natch.”

“Followed by llama livers, roast grasshoppers . . . oh Eddie, do, do.”

“What, fer creep's sake?”

“Buy me some roasted grasshoppers.”

“Ach, they're out of season. You know that. What about some juniper worms? What about some unlaid guinea-fowl eggs yet?”

“Wun-nerful. With peacock brains. Please.”

“So. I'll stop by 'roun' one-thirty. Give me time for my Calc.”

“Swell. And Eddie?”

“What now?”

“Is there a Tom-and-Jerry short with that S-F feature, then I'd flip. Truly.”

“And I could press your lips.”

“They're not wrinkled, thanks.”

Such post-teen talk even they could not maintain for ever and in the pause that ensued, the “paws that refreshes,” Eddie Drosa reflected on his mistress's aberrations. By this time he calculated

he knew her inside out—the fair streaks in her hair had changed in the New Year to dark streaks on a blonde poll and for a bet she'd had the sole of one foot tattooed. Actually, the instep. Had been regretting the action since. From a West Indian Senior in Government Eddie had learned that the only way to remove those mauvish scars was to go over the original with injections of mother's milk, then bind the affected area in banana skins. Knowing Sue, he hadn't released the first half of this recipe. In the Intro to Lit course he was following, the virtues of maidenly innocence were praised by this author or that, and further extolled by the fake Bostonian who taught the course and who talked unceasingly about "charstity" and "ruts." Meanwhile that creature so calculated to give homo sapiens a stimulating time, Miss S.P. 34, had demanded of her lover unmentionable attentions in the tub, poignant communication in an auto doing eighty—exactly—on the Merritt Parkway, why she had even threatened the Frick Museum, further frightening him by saying she found elevators sexy. Anywhere on the limits of anything. Such love-making was "high," had kick, anything else was "nowhere." In sum, sex was strawberry sundaes for this unholy angel and aggrievedly Eddie asked himself—What *right*? What right has she to insist on this Semele gig with all the exotic qualities of the galaxies right there at her fingertips? He was already reflecting on the coming summer with alarm. A canoe in Central Park, maybe? Drive-in movies, of course. But this Tom-and-Jerry short was a new idea, far far out. (If only it could be a Magoo.) Jesus, she'll have me in the penitentiary yet, he thought with a moan. I'll have to marry the kid, it's the only way to stop the race.

"I hear Fitz lost three pounds since Christmas," she said.

"Yeah. Off her earlobes."

"Oi, she's mad as a pickle with me. The studio 'n' all that. *Diga, bun.*"

"What?"

"Oh Eddie, think of the tree-*men*-dous power of that moon rocket forging into outer space, the huge thrust an'"

"Ach, lay offit, Sue. Think of Buck Rogers instead. Anyway the firing's been put off awhiles. I jus' heard on the radio. Get dressed and take your mind off things your mind shouldn't bin on in the first place."

"I'll dress to the hilt tonight."

"Or thereabouts. See you, Sue." With a sigh he reached for the flecked gray suit and his best elevator shoes. He hoped Melody would start at first kick tonight. It might even be symbolic yet.

When a sloe-eyed secretary told the editor a Miss Carol Lester was waiting, he yawned and moved aside the autobiography of an ex-Miss Ecuador he was working on (or ghosting). It was 3:30 P.M. and despite a liquid lunch the impresario urge ran low. He glanced briefly at a jacket pull which appeared to feature a castle, three geese, a girl with a kilt on back to front, and a number of strategically set out turds. This artwork he placed under a hunk of bronze inscribed **GIVE THE READER A BREAK—Williamson, McNeery, Inc.** Then he stood up, looked into a mirror, and with an involuntary sigh ("Fantastic tailoring") turned the switch of his office intercom—"Ask Miss Lester to come right in."

But when the thin girl in the sloppy skirt half-ran forward, hitching up her Band-Aided spectacles, the editor's eyes said *Oh no.* Carol had on a pair of black-iron mobile earrings and her tough hair was scraped excruciatingly off her fairly low forehead. She had already burned two holes in her skirt waiting in the reception room.

The desk moved aside and the editor advanced with a look of respectful sincerity. "Miss Lester?" He intoned it as if she'd just lost a relative. Carol crimsoned, sank into a tulip seat, nearly setting its cushion alight as she fired a further Tareyton.

"It is seldom we have the good fortune, Miss Lester," began the editor, returning to his desk—when the telephone went. From his seat he moved for the instrument like a lion, apology

corrugating his brow. "London? Mark? Good to hear you there. How've you been? It's a madhouse here. Just back from Prague? . . . sure . . . always glad to let you have first crack. . . ."

When he had eventually replaced the receiver he turned a martyred expression on Carol, who had laddered both stockings by rubbing her ankles together.

"This *telephone*. Miss Lesser, I have nightmares, real heebie-jeebies and I mean the true beetles, all about hanging myself with a phone cord. And there always *are* a whole slew of people standing around and roaring with laughter. Thinking it's a gag, you see. So. To get back to this script of yours. Tell you what." He looked up with a smile. "We'll call it a *first draft*. I mean, you take that scene early on between the boy and his aunt." He put up a protective palm. "I wouldn't want to touch it. I'm not out to tinker like some editors. Only, bear this in mind. If the empathy-vehicle were a girl . . . and then take those names you use. They're so *weird*, aren't they? Could they *exist*—I mean in America?" He reached for the ringing telephone. "Desmond?"

Frantically Carol rubbed at a new burn spot in her skirt throughout this call, her lips pleating inwards. The editor appeared to watch her from a distance. Carol listened terrified to a succession of syllables, "ad mats . . . truck banners . . . styrene racks . . . jumbo cards . . . spot. . . ." At the words "*star-studded tie-in*" she wildly grimaced.

"Bye, Desmond. Remember me to Bryan."

After he had replaced the receiver this time the editor laid a hand upon his forehead. His eyes traveled to the tension-remover chair, in Chinese red.

"If I didn't love this business," he began. Then so brusquely that Carol jumped he said, "Where were we?" Her Tareyton hopped to the floor, she picked it up, jammed it in her mouth, then furiously stubbed it on the underside of her chair. By this time her fingers resembled wet crayons.

"So you see, Miss Linton, we could capture the feminine interest with the *girl*. I could even see this as a quality family series.

You take her dad." Here he frowned briefly. "You've made him a steam fitter who studies the Hagiographa. To start with, how many steam fitters are there in the country?"

"I didn't *make* him a steam fitter," said Carol miserably. "He *is* a steam fitter."

"Then again, America isn't the Bronx, you know."

"Not yet," said Carol, but she said it under her breath.

"It could all be less morbid," said the editor. As his telephone rang. "Sure, send it through. Iain? Why, of course we kept it for you to see first." He spoke horizontal on his swivel chair, and when he had finished he turned to her with an even more desolated expression than before. Carol's writhings had become jumpy by now. "To return to this outline of yours, Miss Lenten. The whole thing lacks warmth. Now this is only a *suggestion*, but what about making the girl's boyfriend—it was the boy's girl friend in the original—into a junkie. I mean, sympathy for the beat generation, what-have-you. At the same time we *do* have our troubles with local police chiefs, so the kind father could easily be a cop. It's just an *idea*." The editor started anxiously. Carol had got up and was moving forward, looking peculiar. "Now don't think I want any changes made . . . the basic myth. . . ."

Carol spoke in a murmur. "Is there anything else you'd like. . . ?"

"Tell you what. You show this rough draft to your Professor Phipps up there at Lincoln. We'd like to do it but frankly we're going to need some extra rights to get something as far out as this off the ground at all. If he could come out for it. . . ." The editor consulted a pad. "You tell me your examinations will be over in June?"

"I hate you," cried Carol softly. "I hate you purely."

But he hadn't heard. The telephone was ringing.

"Lovat? Great to hear. How's that London peassouper or. . . ?"

"You, you," and Carol fairly shrieked it at him—"You *dentist!*"

Grabbing her pages of dazzling truths she bolted, earrings

shaking shockingly. She didn't know when she'd felt so humiliated. That operator with his jingo lingo, his professional persiflage. Yet to her surprise, as the streets fled from her in the shambling bus, she felt oddly out of range. In some formless core her confidence had not been troubled by the tailor, and so the insectlike intentness of the city where she'd been born, where she had always lived and where in all likelihood she would die, no more made her forlorn.

Forlorn! the very word is like a bell
To toll me back from thee to my sole self!

When she got out and walked into the dank building where she lived Carol breathed in deeply. Up in her room she washed her taut face and ran a comb through stiff hair and experienced a curious relief. Opening a book at a well-worn marker she read:

Art is not to be judged by any external standard of resemblance. She is a veil rather than a mirror. She has flowers that no forests know of, birds that no woodland possesses. She makes and unmakes many worlds and can draw the moon from heaven with a scarlet thread.

Oscar, dear dear uncle.

When the telephone went she ran into the hall with a kind of pride.

"Stan?"

"What *happened*? Are they taking it?"

She bit her lip. "Yes. I mean no. They want to *do* it, all right."

"But that's wonderful . . . why, you'll get . . . I mean, *congratulations!*"

"Only not the way I want to do it, see. What I mean is, they took it, only they rejected it."

"Uh." In the pause she could almost hear the old bitterness raging up round him in the booth. And when he spoke he was

obviously struggling not to let her hear his disappointment. "That don't matter, Carol. There are other places. Anyways—we always got my *job*."

She gave a wily grin. "Sure. And who am I to tamper with a masterpiece?" Suddenly she said, "Stan, if it rains tonight let's go for a walk."

"And miss the Captain Midnight serial?" he moaned in mockery.

When she had replaced the receiver she was still smiling in this different way, born of some new knowledge of herself, a power to create the world afresh, to live symbolically rather than actually, and so to have each wish fulfilled on earth, including those only an ugly Lincoln coed, born beyond her time, could require of the most infatuate gods.

What Axel had done when he had left the Brigadier ("You can always *state your case*," the latter's parting sally) had been to get in his Volks and drive out of the city north. First—in an unprecedented action—picking up Sylvia Hantmann.

He barely believed it. How he'd dared! Surface excuse—to talk over her term paper in the second half of her Intro to Lit sequence. She had accepted at once and, driving pitilessly, puffing now and then, pent-up Axel hadn't so much as spoken a word to her till Westchester was well behind. His leggy Galatea had sat so peacefully beside him in the Reichsurrey, she seemed somehow changed this term.

Now, over coffee in the restaurant of the Bratt country hotel to which he'd driven her, Axel watched the student journalist with a mixture of quaking apprehension and devastating delight.

Why had he done it? How he had done it! What would Beth, by God, say if she could see them here, in such smug surroundings, the girl's heavy head inclined as by a weight over the cereal she had selected for dessert? Tonio Kröger's head again. The Brigadier would have reached for his riding crop. Quaker Puffed Wheat—"the breakfast that's SHOT FROM GUNS!" Only once

had they touched on anything in the mildest manner emotional. Sylvia had said she was going steady with *The Eagle* editor. "Yeah, marry an engineer," she had chaffed herself to him, "and spend the rest of your life teaching him to read and write."

"Not Mr. Vogel, I think. You're lucky. Both of you."

For a second, and only a second, his hand had lain on hers. Her great eyes were moist, that was all. "Hadn't we better broom off?" she said.

When he followed her to the car, glancing ever-anxiously at his watch, he thought that what Shakespeare would have called the afternoon of her body moved with greater confidence, and less provocation.

Now they were bowling down leafy lanes back to the esurient city, whose mathematical candor lay still well distant. Back, for Sylvia Hantmann, he knew, to the crowded tenement called "my house." Back for him to Chauser, Vaultair's *Candid*, and the ballds of the Sottish Chaucerians. It was suddenly his life and he didn't want any other. He didn't want to move out to some chintz prison in Bergen County. It was a conclusion. He stopped the car and let Sylvia drive.

She did so prettily enough though, when once they drew up for a milkshake, her parking proved appalling. One Chevvy hood ornament and half an unidentified tail fin were her bag by the time they left. Axel felt sleepy beside her, less worried now, happy to contemplate that so purely Pentateuchian head it seemed distinctly appropriate their parkway was named Jericho.

Yes, in this visiting light her skin seemed the hue of the Pentelikon, she appeared to have acquired a tan from the moon. Art and artifice elided.

"I hear your name's up for promotion," she said without turning.

"Long ears at *Eagle*, then. Yes, it's true Katzy initiated it last semester before he resigned; but whether it'll get by the city's another matter. There are five review committees involved and

the audit boys make it such that at a city college you get promoted into a new rank only when it means taking a loss of pay." They dashed through a hamlet called Herrick, deader even than the bard of that name. Suddenly he called, "Promise me."

"What?"

"Promise me, Sylvia, that when you get married you'll never smoke filter tips, vacation in Florida, play canasta, build a dream-house, invest in a car with fail tins . . . I mean tail fins."

"I forgive the spoonerism." She laughed. "Tommy Dehl is making them all the time at our meetings. Incidentally he's helping write the *Hamlet* parody for Carnival. I'm sure he'd be flattered if you could look the script over for them first."

"Glad to," he returned crisply. "After all, now I'm Advisor to Sane I've got nothing to lose, have I? And I think I know the fellow. Apart from very pale hair, isn't he the one who looks like the shaggy Charley in the Wildroot ads?"

"It's *him*," she laughed, veering the car so that Axel had to cry "Miss it!" in earnest as they passed a truck. "But to get back to your decrees," she continued, "I accept them all. No Diner Club memberships positively. You'll never make a Junior League housewife out of me, I fear."

As she drove across the Triborough and into the Bronx, he wanted to add to that—you and your kind are so much older, and wiser, and richer . . . when at a stoplight a Buick braked and the Volks screamed up, bucking like an affronted animal, tossing them forward and rocking their necks. It wasn't a serious jolt but Axel found his hands on her when they'd stopped. He didn't take them away, she didn't move. She looked at him, out of those depthless eyes. A coif of perspiration circled her forehead.

"Any broken bones?"

"You won't find them there," she said gently.

Then suddenly he realized. Violation. Beth. The Brigadier. Heart failure seemed to hold him as the cop advanced, report pad at the ready. CITY PROF FOUND IN . . . he saw the banner

head already, he heard the step of the servers drawing near his classroom door, the Section 903 suspension papers ready for him as they had been ready for Bunch. Oh God! He'd be eliminated as precisely and totally as Orrin had been eliminated, forgotten as Digger was already forgotten. And in those fractional seconds while the pitching life line frayed Axel kissed her as he had never kissed a woman, his soul on his lips, his volition gone. What did it matter, when behind the glasses her eyes were lakes, and her aristocratic face rapt with something close on—yes!—glory. It was like presiding over the crucifixion of the sun.

The patrolman was by the window. "Suppose you're going to tell me you're waiting for a doctor, huh?"

Sylvia Hantmann shook her head. "I have one in the car, thanks."

"You're parked on an intersection. Let's see it, lady."

"What?" Her brow clouded.

"Let's see your license, Miss."

"Well, there's one fastened on the front and another on the back, if they haven't fallen off."

"Indeed, that's a nice original place to put them," agreed the cop, squinting with a smile of sarcastic complicity. "But you ever hear of them little *cards* the State give out to motorists to signify, like. . . ?"

"I left mine at home," she replied. Axel went white.

"Or maybe you lost it couple months ago. Or maybe you didn't like this year's color. C'mon now, let's have it, please."

Axel moved, his stomach blurred. "Look, officer. This is my car. I'm responsible. Here's my license. And," he added with a wretched gasp, "here's my I.D. card, too."

"Let's see. Lincoln College, huh? Say, wait a minute, you didn't happen to teach a Police Academy course in English to a bunch of. . . ."

Axel stared at the man. A beefy lunk, with pencil poised. . . . "You're Edward Jabolski. You got an A." Axel grinned—"At least, I *hope* you got an A."

"B plus. Yeah, we used to call you Main Axel. How was that guy you made us read so much of?"

"Milton."

"Yeah, I 'member." But it was clear his memory of the "human factor" in these courses designed by Mayor Wagner was weak. By now, however, he was smiling through his frown and Axel relaxed to the point of collapse.

"Milton and Coleridge, officer," he whispered faintly.

"Geez, but that stuff was boring, y'know it."

"It still is."

"Well, what you say shift over and give the young lady a chance to learn how to drive. What I mean to say is, well, we got mice in our cells."

"Thank you very much." And driving off he added to her, "There are times when teaching at Lincoln comes in handy in this city."

"I should have sold him a seat for Summer Carnival," she gurgled. "Doesn't a Volks make a cop look a bully!"

Neither of them said anything more intimate than that and he dropped her off near-laconically. She thanked him profusely ("That was a *lot* better than Brophy's Kosher Kitchen") and sped dancily up the steps. With this appealing picture of her overall, congenital magnificence in mind Axel drove contentedly off. He felt no frustrated fear or desire, only now a telling confidence. Might she be happy with her Ivan. My, my, he hummed to himself, Axel nearly axed. He turned into a drugstore and dialed Hamrin.

"What's on your mind?" came the Secretary's level tone.

For a second Axel toyed with the corny crack about local domestic bliss—the one about having a wife and a note from the bank, both overdue; then for the first and (he trusted) last time in his life he asked a colleague to cover for him. Should Beth or the Brigadier want to know where he'd been, he'd spent the evening with the Hamrins. Correction from Mac—playing handball at the City A.C. Axel could imagine Mac the lath, clad in some

liver-colored vest most likely, bearing down hard on his Sherlock Holmes pipe and imagining the ball Axel hadn't been having. Then the Secretary said: "Was about to call you anyway, Ax."

"Concerning?"

"You're excused."

"Come again."

"P.T.," the Secretary returned steadily. "It's official. Take a look at Bulletin Board tomorrow morning. Mesrob has just announced a Physical Training requirement. Every member to report to the sports staff twice a week."

Axel said, "What is this? What on earth are you gassing about, Mac?"

"He even called me about the possibility of having a *Department run*. Of course, we have to be seen by a Health Education doc and passed fit first. That will thin the ranks. After which," came the voice slowly, "regulation uniform will be worn."

"For Christ's sake," cried Axel. "You don't say. Frankly, I'd hoped Mesrob's bent for farce had been satisfied by that pay affair. No, this is fantastic. The guy's going nuts."

"Oddly enough, that's the fourth time I've heard those words used of our Chairman today. No, Ax, two sessions a week at some form of physical training in the gym. Think how Kennedy would approve of the idea. We're all to be checked. Dammit, my friend, we require it of our students, why shouldn't we demand it of ourselves?"

"Is that what he's saying? Hell, it *can't* be true."

"Look for yourself and see. And you're excused."

Axel groaned. "That I'll accept. Put me down with those who, when they feel the urge to take exercise, lie down till it's worn off."

"One trusts that after the Bunch hearing our man Mesrob may simmer down, and simply run for President."

"Him or . . . ah, the burden of high office, Mac," said Axel, the grim thought of R. J. C. Phipps serving his college and his city by means of serving R. J. C. Phipps obtruding itself into his

mind once more. That joker would skewer him horribly. With automatic release he suggested, "Think we ought to have a meeting on this maybe?"

Hamrin hmmned. "Might be difficultish to round up the younger men till week after next. There's this Mayoral visit, I mean."

"Not again!"

"Yup. With the Prexy aspiring to Senate next fall we're going to be blessed by a fairly constant stream of dignitaries from City Hall, it seems."

They chatted some more, then hung up. Ridiculous. Axel straightened as he made for the Volks. Climbing into the banana he stiffened apprehensively. Face the music, indeed. But when he got back Beth was surprisingly unanxious, worried by another minor household crisis. Almost Axel felt cheated. The Brigadier was in exactly the same position in his chair, now well mellowed by their liquor.

"Like to meet this Mins man," he rapped.

"Well, you won't here," replied Axel—and he shot off to the pile of papers that perpetually accused him in his den.

Eight

INT . . . NIGHT . . . Bangcrowded subway . . . Stanley Schochet is being shoved around, trying to board a train . . . Carol with him, drowned under texts, her hair dyed gray.

EXT . . . DAY . . . Bronx side street . . . stupefaction of passersby as file of singleted (PROPERTY OF CITY OF NEW YORK) be-shorted runners, mostly paunchy-old, come trotting past, puffing badly . . . English Dept. on common run, Sports staffer loping beside . . . a camera clicks, some ribald japes.

INT . . . DAY . . . Alpha Pi house . . . Jesse and Roy chucking Cheez-Bits at the light fixtures . . . Picture of Fitz (*Miss Seatnik Seven*) replaces Jayne Mansfield . . . stereo blare, the cave roof rocks.

INT . . . DAY . . . standing so erect he appears to be leaning backwards, the Cadillac Professor flashes glances at Venetian mirror, in which image of self is reflected to advantage . . . then steps impressively into boardroom.

INT . . . NIGHT . . . Raymond's . . . Geneva's prance . . . outspoken beads, and bare-fruit waist, and mulish jut.

INT . . . DAY . . . In college pool, deep beneath snow-covered city Gothic (Ye Olde Schytte, in student slang), the last of the English Instructors completes compulsory P.T. Striving to please even in this ignoble activity, Sigmund Fleisch endeavors to dive . . . with Danzig's pure-bred boxers baying beneath, stark, Sigmund stands, back-to-front on board, his nostrils twitch (a *Gruyère quiche* a-bake), his eyes level noticeboard—

A Swimming Pool is as sanitary as the occupants that make use of the Swimming Area.

A Swimmer that does not take a *soap shower* will be barred from swimming in our pool.

A dirty body makes for—CONTAMINATED SWIMMING.

So Sigmund's unshowered body quivers icy on board . . . tries desperately not to look down as skinhead Danzig bellows from below, "Never mind the mutts, Professor. *Jump!*"

Nine

Matters came to a head about the time Doctor Bunch was due to be "heard." CCMCE had announced postponements of this occasion twice, but finally it was called for the first Thursday after Easter break, toward the end of April. Repeated badgering of the Doctor's lawyer had elicited the information that these delays were this time of the plaintiff's choice. But the stern figure of the suspended professor himself had been conspicuous only for its absence. Rumors filtered in. Odd individuals claimed to have caught sight of Bunch here and there about the city, often in the *most* unlikely places. But at Lincoln everyone knew what rumors were worth.

Matters reached a head when the madness of Mesrob Mins grew to such a pitch that the introduction of time clocks into the Department was hinted at for the following year. Hoyd had seen a letter in Miss Wilmer's typewriter when handing in a signed requisition for three sheets of Departmental stationery. He himself had already been assigned to work in registration that autumn. But by now smiling Hoyd had other plans and he merely relayed the information to the others with very dexterous sarcasm.

"Christamighty, what a note!" Lorenzo had yelped, on hearing of the scheme. "Was Mes ever in the military, anyone know?"

The trouble was, the President was said to be wholly unopposed to any of these efforts by the new English Department Chairman to turn Lincoln into more of a catatonic asylum than

it was as a rule. How *could* he object, on the eve of high office? Any measure calculated to increase "teacher efficiency" had obligatorily to be rubber-stamped and run along. After all, time clocks were punched by the administrative staff, it was hard to advance good reasons why a teacher on the same payroll shouldn't do so too. UFT were over a barrel in the matter.

Oddly enough, it was the P.T. program that really rankled in the Department's own heart. This had received considerable publicity and Kennedy indeed was said to have unofficially approved the idea. It was this, however, which made for real mutiny in the ranks, more especially as a good deal of dodging was being done—R. J. C. had got off on a "murmur," one professor managed to square it with the sports staff by playing darts, while Sigmund Fleisch, gentle Sigmund forever tangled in his trailing scraf like poor Neaera's hair, oho he had struck up a most rewardingly professional relationship all of a sudden with the ex-chef in the stadium. But as Hamrin, whose duties now included reporting in person to his Chairman at a set hour each day, put it when convoking the emergency meeting of the younger men—"Some of us seem to feel it's gone *far enough*." It was clear this sort of lark couldn't be tolerated the statutory four years for Mesrob's office to run out, presuming (as everyone did) he wouldn't make the Presidency in the fall. Only Axel was excused, and was mad as a minute as a consequence. And it was all so singularly stupid, yet somehow typical, that *au fond* both Katzman and Mesrob were for supporting Orrin Bunch. In fact, Axel now did his P.T. and took it more conscientiously than any of them. He'd promised to stand for Bunch and, what's more, he'd told Students for Sane he would personally participate in their next summer Peace March on Washington. This one was to be made in beds, rolled into the capital by volunteers.

For Sigmund, meanwhile, April was not the cruellest month, despite his shared fears for the suspended professor (if they got him on perjury yet, could be burn perhaps?). No, March was. March was when the letter from the City Council for Municipal

College Education arrived in the Departmental mailbox. March was when the slow anguish of dismissal moved unbearably through the dark corridors of his mind. Between the MLA meeting and tenure, as that fellow of infinite jest, Hoyd Rushzak, had put it to him once, falls the renewal of appointment. Sigmund was waiting for it, adrenalin aflow, knowing it always came too late to make it possible to apply elsewhere with any decency intact. Too, he awaited reply to his Ford Foundation application for a personal Bloomsday in Dublin. This year June 16th. fell on a Thursday itself. Poifekt! And, as he had tentatively entered on his sixteen-page project sheet, he was painstakingly developing a theory that *Joyce was still alive*.

So Sigmund's Baltic eyes sagged stupendously as, with no exile or cunning to call on at all, he perspired through an especially agonizing Intro to Lit class in a Jackson basement, the heat slamming with playful regularity through the pipes and the students at the back using his carefully compiled reading list as napkins for their lunch. A question on Dante's *Inferno*: How come Judas was down there being chawed up when all he'd done was what any House Un-American Activities Committee informer did daily? And those guys got a Purple Heart already.

Mopping his brow with a sumptuous though threadbare square of India silk, Sigmund finished the class and labored upstairs, tapping his blackthorn, lugging his bookbag, in order to complete his second P.T. requirement for the week. For a moment he rested on a bench in the hall. Danzig would be another fifteen minutes with his Saving class and then, and then only, could Sigmund surreptitiously descend, coast clear. His shy lips moved with amusement. No more high-diving now, I think. No, sir. For Danzig had discovered that Sigmund was a gifted cook and, in return for checking the English Instructor off, was rifling his repertoire of *cordon bleu*. Yet, though Sigmund chuckled to himself, this was clearly something that should not be told in Gath. Least of all should it reach the Ashkelon of taskmaster Mins's ears.

Striving to ignore the bursts from the PA system overhead Sigmund sat, puzzled now, the nineteenth learned work on Joyce to appear in the year two inches off his wide-winged nose. So far so good. His own *trouvaille*, the Black Hand references, intact. But what was this? The distinguished scholar examined the snow in one of the earlier stories: first, it *symbolized* death (being white, a "pall," so forth), yet concomitantly it *symbolized* "withheld life," since it could turn into water. Which was it? Or wasn't it? Sigmund shook his head, he gave a pull at his Göttingen scarf, scanned the dial of his watch. Still some minutes before it would be safe. He got up, and it was then he stumbled on something rather interesting.

The Bell Tower of Jackson Hall, consisting from the outside of crisp Tudor of insistent ostentation, had long fascinated Sigmund, a Lorelei leading to dreams of the old country. He had never heard a bell sound from it and he didn't know that anyone else had either. John Betjeman would have enjoyed the Bell Tower. It was, in fact, half a pity that the Christmas adornment of an Isotta had finally been gotten off its turret, though not by the city; no, the operation had been achieved by the student members of *Elec Eng 271D* ("Reactions of Triarylmethyl Equilibria in Monosubstituted Stress Conditions"). Dean of Parking Pin had pretended to direct from a distance.

Sigmund secured the elevator up (condescending attendant), got out, climbed. Tap-tapping his way on all three legs. At the very top the steps became planked and gloom drooped slow about. On he wound ever upwards, however, a wad of Wrigley adhering to one sole, thinking of that theological breakfast in the Martello Tower, of the ideal of the garret artist—would he find a "round gunrest" at the top?

It grew darker. He realized that the arrow slits which looked so academically medieval from the outside (and so delighted the candy-store salesmen parents) were in reality fake. Sigmund frowned. Pity. Then he stopped.

"Excuse," he mumbled automatically.

Odd noises. A voice uncertainly addressed him. Then crackled off. Explosively recommenced. Then cut again.

"Hello CQ. CQ, CQ, CQ. This is W2ADS, W2 Able Dog Sugar, W2ADS in Ohio calling CQ and W2ADS is standing by for a call."

Silence. Sigmund felt himself tremble. Click! Then a voice, passionate and human, said slowly: "W2ADS, W2ADS, this is W2 Honest Jolin, W2HJ over." Sigmund realized he had stumbled on the college radio station.

He was about to retrace his steps in disappointment at the prosaism, and was indeed clattering dangerously backwards to do so, when a door above opened in a dazzle and a voice cried, "How's DX, Joel?"

"Lousy. Only Stateside today."

"Okay, you birds," said the first speaker. "The shack's disgusting. How 'bout coupla you guys lending a hand?" Silence. One yawn. "Hey Dave, wanna len' a hand, you morons?"

"Not me," came the answering growl. "I'm not a garbage man."

Sigmund shook his head. Sanitation eliminator, please. This was America. He was about to retreat when a girl appeared in the doorway. With the light behind her and the division of her body vividly proclaimed, she was well worthy of *alt' Wien*, startling Sigmund promptly realized, pony-tailed, with panda eyes and inky brows, clad perhaps in scarlet tights, the kind of thing his mother might have worn, he reflected, years and years ago—before, in her case, putting on some ten or twelve secondary garments later.

"Thanks, Sue," said a voice. "We'll check like you suggest. If that Bunch professor really has this pinned on him, then it's curtains for sure. He hasn't a hope in hell. CCMCE was right to fire him."

What was this?

"Hey," said the girl, "dig this palooka giving us the eagle. *Vámonos, hombre!* Step right in, why *don-cha*?"

Sigmund stepped in blinking. The place glittered with equip-

ment, oily parts, old packing cases and sawhorses, much spent paper and a fair deal of sheer garbage, beer cans, so forth. Some youths were playing a card game on the floor. A hunted-looking individual in a windbreaker over a college T-shirt was harnessed to the main machine in one corner. He waved affably at Sigmund as the girl did rapid introductions—"JoelDaveJerry-LonnyEddieRod and *I'm*," she wound up proudly, pony-tail tilting like a plumb line, "Susan Geneva Libermann."

Sigmund gravely bobbed. Whom did they mistake him for?

A boy said, "Sue plans to put the B back into America's alphabet soup."

"She's our Girl Friday," said one of the poker players without looking up.

"Only today's Toosday. *Hey* you geeks!" she called. "We've got a helper." Then she settled her frame atop a packing case with a copy of *God's Little Acre* and a bottle of Blite.

"I must . . . excuse," Sigmund was saying when one of the players downed his hand and came toward him with a frown.

"Say, it's a *good thing* you dropped by," and he pushed out a half-filled trash can, "otherwise we'd *never* have got the shack cleaned up."

Sigmund stumbled on verges of expiatory objection but he was constitutionally unable to say no to appeals for help, and his mild mutter now was not construed as refusal.

"Geez, what a bunch of free-loaders *these* guys are," said the leader, helping Sigmund tote the trash can. Miss Libermann fluttered, the individual martingaled to the machine beeped away, and suddenly Sigmund found himself incongruously carrying the can down the stairs. Halfway down he had to stop. The thing seemed to be principally filled with a volcanic haggis of the sweepings of some asbestos factory. Shrugging to himself he was about to leave it there, then decided to go on down and have done with it, making a subterranean entry into the Sports Stadium thereafter.

He had circumnavigated the final corner and emerged onto

the tiled floor of upper Jackson when a small, stringy and prostatic elder wearing huge hearing-aid horn-rims ran into him. Angrily the little man snapped—"Put it there!"

Horror-struck, Sigmund felt his limbs soften. The President! He had never spoken to the man in his life. But he knew the face, that crinkled skin, so senile it was well-nigh squamous. Sigmund shivered in his unshone shoes, his burden slipping from him.

"Sir . . . sir. . . ."

Here was the chance to tell him about Schleppfuss at Goslar. Sigmund stepped, tripped on his scarf, scattered blackthorn and books, suddenly the refuse was flying, he was himself sliding on something mushy, there were crashings and gasps. When he finally sat up straight on the slimy floor, a small severed frog, abandoned specimen of a Bio class no doubt, lay in the President's lap.

"Idiot!"

Gasping with fear, Sigmund assisted the old man up. The skinny figure left him, elbows poked, mumbling in fury. Oh, oh. Did photographs accompany applications for promotion? Messed and unkempt Sigmund hastened for the Stadium.

Danzig was waiting for him in the pool, immaculately unclad, boxers leashed. Books on technique by Armbruster and Kiphuth lay on the marble before him. Sigmund stripped and put on a toweling robe. Over this he assumed an apron. Already he felt better. The ingredients for a Chicken Cacciatora Maddeleena had been carefully set out in the little kitchen adjoining the pool. Smiling, he checked over the chopped garlic, the brand of olive oil, the two bay leaves, finally the vintage of Chablis Premier Cru Fourchaume provided. He noted absently that a pair of fencing foils had been set to one side. It was just as well to be safe. Danzig didn't want to be caught any more than he did. Thirty years beside the pool was a long, long time.

INT. Alpha Pi Upsilon frat house—MS—Mark De Vayo reading

on sofa b.g.—CAMERA TRUCKS slightly in—Dressed only in sweat-soaked undershirt above the waist, De Vayo peruses paperback whose shiny cover suggests some strike in Le Garment Centre, or moratorium on women—he reads slowly aloud, the mouth not moving much—

DE VAYO

They heard my scream, felt their insides tear out and spray . . . so I blazed with the billy when the whore wasn't looking . . . I kicked her diaphragm clear across the floor and took my time with her tits . . . face globbered to a mush, his kidneys slid down the wall like twin split plums . . . the next blow was a grenade, but grenades only chip stone, and Mike was harder. . . .

CS—Mark looking o.s. left f.g.—crosses to mirror, stares at self, flexes the glistening flesh, then reads aloud again, more laboriously this time, cold mouth of death, with selfward flick and twitch of grip—

For a while I listened to the gurgle from where his guts should have been . . . pretty soon the gurgle stopped and another slice of commie horse-shit. . . .

MS—During this reading CAMERA TRUCKS back entering, unseen by De Vayo, Lewy Jantaneo and sleepy Tommy Dehl—they react to his reading—De Vayo whirls—reacts to their expressions—CAMERA TRUCKS in—

JANTANE O

All male and barbed wire, eh Markie. Who wrote the Cro-Magnon?

DE VAYO

Huh, visit from *The Eagle* yet. How come youse guys got in here? Since when you two bin members, like?

JANTANE O

We came as good friends of Ivan Vogel, Mark. We wanted to talk wif' you.

DE VAYO

Yeah. Why, I . . . guess I was jus' going out myself, if it's all the same with you, Lewy.

JANTANEO

You're staying. It's about Sylvia Hantmann, boy.

DEVAYO

It is? Pardon my askin', on'y—summon' *invite* you guys in here, by any chance?

JANTANEO

We're staying, Hairyballs. Or is that your head?

DEVAYO

Look. You may be call' Sugarfoot roun' d'*Eagle* office but, man, get your toe out of my coffee here, willya. Fellers li'ble to get rough 'bout uninvited guests in the house, know what I mean. Anyhows, let's all sit down and have us a drink. There's some pretty good . . .

JANTANEO

You're too damn smart at liquoring people up at the right moments, ain't you, Markie. Syl was a virgin. A hundred-pointer.

DEVAYO

Virgin schmirgin. Listen, fellers, don' pluck my heartstrings, willya, they ain't been tuned tonight.

JANTANEO

Very funny. I don't think.

DEVAYO

Now see here, Lew, let's be reasonable 'bout this thing. Mean, I give Syl a good time maybe, what's so wrong about that? She led me on, I din't *want* for to do it, she jus' *seduce* me, man, you know how the chicks feel about Markie.

JANTANEO

We know how Ivan feels. We know how we feel. Boy.

DEVAYO

Now listen, you two come in here for a knuckle sandwich or sumpin'?

JANTANEO

Okay, Tom, let's go.

LS—Silent till now, silent Tommy Dehl silently takes off his si-

lent spectacles, raises silent sweater over skin-colored (silent) hair, expressionless, bleak—

DE VAYO

Awright. If that's the way ya wannit, *don'* say I din't warn ya. I tellya I hit a fellow in Flatbush Avenoo las' week an' that guy's still going down.

JANTANEO

No kidding.

DE VAYO

No kiddin'. I'm jus' sorry to have to do this to you, really Iyam. Y're going to get your teeth awful sunburnt before ya get outa here.

DEHL

I'll forget to bleed. Just for you, Markie.

DE VAYO

Easy, Horse. I'm not a meathead.

MLS—De Vayo puts up mitts, rippling his trunk—at right b.g. Dehl strips off shirt and shows suddenly very strong white arms, hard as fire—De Vayo holds his meat—

DE VAYO

Awright. On'y I tellya, I never touched the chick. She as't first. I never hit a woman in my life.

JANTANEO

Not first, eh.

DEHL

Women are the on'y people Mark De Vayo hits.

DE VAYO

Why you crutty. . . .

MS—With thudding rush he lurches in—they mix—Dehl flicks out, paw of a cat, and Mark whomps backwards besides a chair, sitting hard with surprised expression—he rests there gravely dazed, left eye and cheek swelling fast—

JANTANEO

Strike one. That was for deforestation of a certain member of the staff of *The Eagle*.

DE VAYO

Y'son of a bitch.

JANTANEO

Hit him again, please, Tom.

CAMERA PANS to right as De Vayo with hitch and dip undulates his shoulders in again—Dehl, calm, pivots fast, with almost casual loop, flips the big fellow flat on his back—De Vayo bleeds—

JANTANEO

Strike two. That was for getting her drunk. Hit him again.

MS—De Vayo pants erect—high hard straight Dehl fells him ox-like with a left—scoops his clothes, replaces specs—

JANTANEO

And that last one was for doin' it in Flushing yet. And she din't even get your pin. Listen, Markie, you touch that chick again and we'll come back here and knit your spaghetti into Argyle socks already. Believe me, being Eyetallian myself I knows the recipes.

DE VAYO

Uh . . . y'wait . . . 'ntil the fellers . . . the guys in the house goin' to crucify the pair of you for this, honest to God I swear . . .

JANTANEO

How you scare us, Mark.

MLS—Dehl goes, slaps his face back and forth—

DEHL

An' I may come back and do this jus' for luck. I like not ye man with ye overlong sideburns.

JANTANEO

Farewell, sweet Prince.

DE VAYO

Jus' wait 'ntil I tell the Prior.

DEHL

Shut it. Or I'll come back and really hide your hair oil, boy.

MS—CAMERA TRUCKS back exiting Dehl and Jantaneo—Dehl pats down yarn on head—De Vayo rises to an elbow—

DE VAYO

I tellya, ya'll never make the frat. Either one of you.

VOICE OF JANTANEO

Boy, what a fate.

VOICE OF DEHL

Your Royal Lowness.

CS—De Vayo rolls to sofa, dabs cut underlip, gets erect, swings
—CAMERA PANS as he surveys himself in glass, gives a Method
shrug, kicks at a cushion, rocks—

DE VAYO

What a pig. I giv' it her good, good . . . she practically had it
comin' outa her ears yet.

MS—In access of rage De Vayo starts to door, spots trash can
there, picks up lifeless kitten in it, smashes fist into its face—he
goes on pounding the dead fur—CAMERA shooting slightly down—

DSLVE

My dear Avery,

I'm snatching a few moments to write to you before rushing through this crowded city to catch a very important meeting of the so-called younger men in our Department. It promises, indeed, to be *all-important*. But first let me say how sorry I am, your mother and I are, over your *emotional difficulties*. Insomnia is particularly distressing. Your mother and I can well appreciate the depth of your feelings, my dear, and we shall be more than happy to discuss the matter with you on your return in June. We can then have a fuller talk than is possible over the telephone, a real "heart-to-hearter" when we can thoroughly discuss it all. Incidentally your mother has knitted no less than five full and handsome towels this term in her efforts to assist the Vivisection Investigation League, 11 East 44th Street, New York City 17.

I must now tell you about the visit of city dignitaries to our college early last week, for the newspaper accounts did it small justice, my dear. Although nothing I say here will be in any way incriminatory I must beg you, Ave, to destroy this letter as punctiliously as I know you do with all communications from this pen. Thanks, Avie.

Well, in the absence at class of our Chairman, the individual named Mins, I was Departmental delegate to the little procession and can

assure you the affair was a "comedy of errors" from start to finish, from the initial visit to the cyclotron, and demonstration there of fission involving some four hundred electrical connections plus goodness knows what mechanical equipment besides, during which the senior Physics Professor plunged us all in darkness by putting an AC plug in a DC socket, down to the moment when we inadvertently rested in an obscure Student Lounge being cleared for the Carnival and a cleaning man walked off with a chair in which Bob Moses chanced still to be seated. Nor would the cleaner be dissuaded by disclosure of the famous functionary, either. The information only made him madder, Ave!

But the *pièce de resistance*, so far as I was concerned, came on our visit to the swimming pool at the bottom of the Sports Building. Ryan, the head man there, left us to one Danzig who confronted the *cortège* with embarrassment from the first, I thought. I was proven correct. (By the by, you know that the *-en* past participle we retain in this country is actually more archaic than British usage. Compare the German. I have been getting some interesting entries on this point.) Well, we were ahead of schedule, the Mayor had to catch a plane to Albany, you see.

As we entered I observed an attenuated pilgarlic in Regency-striped swimming trunks setting up an exquisite Cipriani sofa on the dais, where the instructors take their ease. It was none other than Paul Kristoff of our own Department, Ave! You can guess my surprise!! And you'll recall what I told you—*verbally*, that is—about our new Departmental requirements concerning Physical Training. It seems that some of us have been, shall I say, "helping" the sporting instructors out in kind, as it were. Later I learned that Paul has a very bold project of altering the *period* of Danzig's dais, yes from mock-Sapphic to loose William and Mary. There were gashes of plaster where he was installing an Adam mirror, a lovely thing politely festooned with rams' heads and gilt bordering. The music of Grètry or possibly it was Sacchini seemed to filter from somewhere. Danzig did not introduce Paul and I affected ignorance of his existence. An amazing thing! I do believe the delegation took him for one of the many moving men we had met en route, and were happy to avoid another chair-raising (I nearly wrote hair-raising!) incident.

As we passed round that placid pool, however, I became aware of

(a) one distinctly appetizing *smell*, and (b) a series of minor reverberations apparently emanating from a closed door at the far end of the dais. At times the floor underfoot seemed to shudder slightly. But if you know Lincoln, my dear, such is not unusual. At this point, however, we were nearing the door when, after some gamboling and frisking of feet, it opened a crack and something shot across the tiling in front of us. It was a Boxer dog, back arched, stub of tail drawn in, and clearly very frightened. I became aware of the smell of cooking and while Danzig clarified the layout I concentrated my gaze on this far door. Avie—black smoke was emerging from under it. I heard something come crashing down. The pool gave a rock. There was a muttering rumble and a head was stuck round the door—“The paprika, where you keep the *paprika*?” The face disappeared, but not before I had identified it as that of *another* member of our Department, namely Sigmund Fleisch!

The Mayor turned interrogatively as more smoke billowed round our ankles, accompanied by a kind of crazy trampling from within. A member of the Fire Department in the delegation started looking grim. Danzig hastily explained that the college was crowded for space this semester for its new *experimental* labs, and staged a diversion with his second dog. We moved on. But I lingered behind the others and was able to observe, as the door opened in another whooshing hiss, our dear colleague Fleisch, face flushed, bending over a chafing dish, one arm aloft and grappling a yard-long skein of glutinous batter. As we left the pool Danzig returned to the dais at the double. I imagined I heard a maniacal laugh. I believe something was thrown into the water. At least there was some Satanic hissing behind. Danzig moves delightfully, very precisely on the balls of his feet, a delight to watch. Incidentally I am most happy to think that this same Sigmund Fleisch is now assured of support from the Ford Foundation for his investigations into *Finnegans Wake*. He's just the man for the job.

Danzig's precision of movement reminds me a trifle of our late and lamented Professor Bunch, of whom you know. You'll recall he was suspended for “conduct unbecoming,” whatever such phrase portends. Local information has now unhappily footnoted the affair. A coed alleges that Orrin . . . well, so to say . . . *tampered* with her during a composition conference. Amazing as such a charge may seem, none of us knew Orrin Bunch too well and approaches of an over-

familiar type toward a student are, as you know, Avie, completely taboo. The professor assumes the role in conference of doctor or lawyer. I must say I remain skeptical of this rumor until it can be further proven and, as a matter of fact, I'm off to the meeting tonight, unexpected, to convey this news more widely, and elicit reaction. This is not something that should yet be widely bruited abroad, I feel, and so I should be so very glad if you would either, Ave dear, return this missive to me, clearly marked *First-Class Mail*, or most scrupulously incinerate it in the customary manner, please. Naturally I have as usual taken a carbon copy myself but you have no idea how. . . .

The emergency meeting of younger men turned out, as was only proper, to consist of a large number of older men. It was, in fact, a *sub rosa* Departmental meeting, held off campus so that no one could case the joint.

The advantage of holding this frankly anti-Mesrob meeting in Mac Hamrin's apartment was not merely that Mac had such a spacious living room as that a number of senior members, the anticipated Norwell Cramm included, couldn't use the place quite so much as an echo chamber as they could, and did, Convocation Room. There were, after all, certain social conventions to be observed. Mac's wife, for instance, put in a token "gracious" appearance. (Question—asked of several who hadn't seen the Secretary's better half before—what did she look like? Answer—she exactly resembled the companion of someone who smoked a Sherlock Holmes pipe. *Id est*, a female Watson, or the usual faculty-wife disappointment.) It was when Paul Kristoff came, however, suit flapping on a body lean to emaciation, that the really crucial nature of their deliberations was driven home to the assembly. This meant the fairy wing was dissatisfied. So Mesrob would simply have to go. But how? They were constitutionally committed to him for four years now.

Mrs. Mac served a series of cold hors d'oeuvres which in any other company would have been considered insultingly insufficient, while Mac as mine host plied the relaxing Scotch. At one point in the preliminaries someone turned the television knob,

the goon-box came alight ("We have it for the *kids*, you know") and to their consternation the image of the Cadillac Professor clarified itself. R. J. C. still had his Carib tan, accented by white pompadour and waxed mustaches; to this he had added a lemon necktie and—visible below his table when the camera understandably backed—a pair of pearl-buttoned spats bought in a bewildered boutique in the Burlington Arcade during Christmas break.

"That's what I call a really pukka tan," commented Hoyd Rushzak with a cutting smile.

"That kind of color you acquire only in the Khyber Pass," explained grinnin Harvey Spiller, "with the aid of gun oil, vodka, and vulture's blood."

The burnt-umber hum of Rather Jolly Clever's voice became distinct. He was explaining how the book club sponsoring his program was next month giving away as bonus offerings a copy of the latest Sears Roebuck catalog, a Herman Wouk doll which said, "*This is my God*," and a set of cocktail napkins each individually initialed by none other than R. J. C. Phipps. Hamrin snapped the switch. The image quivered as if resentfully for a second, then cut out.

"No one really considers R. J. C. a serious possibility for our Presidency next year, do they?"

"He knows a great deal," advanced Ned Meilberg cautiously.

"When and how to cash his paycheck, for example," put in Bill Beobach.

"Yeah, he's visible," added Axel curtly. "What else do you want of the President of a city college?"

Passing them with ready quart Mac Hamrin remarked, "But I believe there was mention of the likelihood in tonight's evening paper."

"Knowing R. J. C., I'm sure there was."

At the rear of the room Paul Kristoff had discovered a piece of Chinese Chippendale, over which he was going into ecstasies. He further admired the Secretary's plummy vest, but disliked re-

taining jackets on books, a habit he held *vulgar* ("Before you know it you're in a bookshop"). Mac's apartment was in reality a clutter of junk his wife had picked up on foreign travel and when Kristoff asked what period it was, Axel snorted, "Mac's décor is neo-Hallowe'en." And Paul sat down in a huff.

At that moment to everyone's surprise Seymour Katzman strode in, greeted Hamrin's wife, accepted a glass, sat cross-legged on the carpet, and the thing suddenly became *really* serious. Something was *up*. Prompted by her spouse, the one lady left, a bit more academic chaff went the obligatory rounds, and then Norwell opened out:

"I believe—as it were—in studying the, ah, uh, a question of this kind, and broad you might say context of, ah, meaningfulness. . . ."

Said Bill Beobach with flawlessly solemn face when this had finished, "I think we should take the matter *under serious advisement.*"

And Norwell sank satisfied into his seat. He had on his customary tweed jacket, together with "the tie that blinds"; having been lightly grazed in the ankle by a javelin while doing track he went a little lame, a disability that noticeably increased when in the vicinity of Mesrob Mins. It should be added that by this time the sports scene in *Decline and Fall* had been surpassed in Lincoln's Indoor Stadium where it now seemed at times, notably during English Department attendance, that all that was lacking was a roller derby. The end of the 100-yard dash, for instance, slammed into the Respite Area behind the Judges' Stand, a movable affair of balsa wood which had already been sent crashing twice by a Turkish sophomore (and friend of Jerry Blass), a real behemoth who had in every sense shattered the shot-put record.

"Christamighty, man," Lorenzo fussily barked. He too had on his hairiest tweeds for the meeting. "We got to *do* something! Know what I mean?"

"Had enough," muttered a voice from the back.

"I see your point," Bill Beobach remarked in a quiet tone. At which words there was a positive consternation of smiles. "I wonder if you gentlemen realize that next term I shall have to take a hotel room in town four nights a week, thanks to the punitive program Mesrob is working out for me then."

Harvey Spiller, Creative Writing wiz, fresh from having sown a set of chiasmic symbols in a student's story, inserted his oar: "I even heard a rumor he's trying to get a ruling through Council that no city teacher be permitted to live in New Jersey or Connecticut."

"That, too." Beobach nodded grimly. "It's a mandala-liberation for the man, I'm sure."

"Jung or no Jung," briskly interjected Roman Gladberg, who had found his time for article-writing seriously sliced into by Mesrob's requirements, "I should like to most courteously specify that the impending institution of punch cards by our—er—dear enemy, shall I say, threatens to in fact relegate us to. . . ." The wavy-silver head flashed, cocked atop trim-suited torso; it was Roman's day for oxymorons as well as split infinitives, it seemed. He finished up—"To instantaneously investigate the Departmental bylaws under which our, er, unfriendly friend is empowered to factually operate ought to be our concealed concern, it seems to me."

They all looked gloomy. "Has been done." Mac Hamrin was creating fire.

"Is this punch-card idea a real possibility?" asked one member, thoughtfully fingering a Florentine poignard he had plucked off a table nearby. "Is it in order?"

"Departmental athletics, IBM punch cards, malicious duties for errant members, doctors' chits, need I continue!"

The speaker was Axel. Since his innocent excursion with Sylvia Hantmann the busy liberal had been undergoing a psychological conversion. The Brigadier had left, but when doing so had let slip that his wife had a fifth of Armenian blood in her veins. Either this or his liberation via Sylvia (or else the

setting-up exercises he was doing in the gym) had utterly altered Axel's relationship with Beth. His social inferiority had fled away and suddenly her peaky face had become palely interesting, evidence of a wan decay. Why, only last night she had shown him the understanding of a Circassian slave. Never had they been so close. An elfette, yet. Axel was amazed, most grateful to the fates. A life of tellurian alliteration stretched before him in the city. He was having an affair with his wife!

"No outside calls, now these checks on our grading. . . ."

Mac Hamrin groaned. "You're telling me. Do you people realize that, in addition to having to make my daily report, I've now been assigned the job of tabulating the grading habits of every individual member of the Department over the past ten years."

"You'll find them in any fraternity file," said someone.

"All in all," continued Axel, "it's been quite a record for a term or so's Chairmanship."

"We gotta get shot of him," declared Lorenzo. "But Christamighty, how?"

The Secretary was the first to break their silence.

Out pipe. "I suppose you don't happen to know of any nefarious political activity in Mesrob's past, do you, Ned?" In pipe.

Meilberg affected to be immoderately amused. It was said that he was having a Damascus experience with existentialism, and certainly his current insinuations were larded with terms like *dread*, *unease* and *the absurd*. "No, no," Ned said.

Out pipe. "No Girl Guide groups, copies of Trotsky in his office, attendance at poetry readings in the Village, ever booed a batter on home plate in the Yankee Stadium?" In pipe.

"I'm quite confident Mesrob hasn't offended under the Silck Law, Mac," Ned said with tremendous joviality.

"What about the Lyons Residence Law covering city employment? Has Mes filled those requirements to the letter?"

"Mesrob ever lend anyone any pornography?" someone inquired sullenly. "These days, possession's a crime."

"There's a dusty State law," broke in Seymour Katzman with a grin, "about mailing a man an offensive letter."

It was the first time he had entered the discussion and, laughing, they turned toward him as he crouched, arms akimbo, on the floor. On the whole, all present liked Seymour and this emotion increased round the room.

Paul Kristoff here craned forward. "I've heard from, well, *sources* I shouldn't perhaps name, that AAUP are considering withdrawing their accreditation from Lincoln."

"That is correct," clicked Seymour calmly.

Mac Hamrin cut the hush—"An AAUP blacklist, my God."

Brief Babel at this.

"The man's insane!"

"Mesrob's gone too far. . . ."

"I categorically and absolutely wish to definitively repudiate our backward leader." This last from Roman, naturally enough, and it produced for a second another puzzled pause.

"And have any of you an idea as to why the Association of American University Professors is likely to rescind its confidence in our institution?" Katzman asked.

"Most of us here," Mac Hamrin replied, "imagine it's the matter of Mesrob's treatment. That's the issue, isn't it?"

"No. The Bunch business, I gather." It spoke volumes for Seymour's method that there was not one inquiry for authentication; all accepted their former Chairman's word at once. "You see, they were unhappy—so I was given to understand—about the manner in which the whole thing was handled by CCMCE. A matter of principle, shall we say. The way in which Orrin was bundled out like that, I mean."

"But *was* he bundled, Sey?" This from Ned.

"Yes."

"Of course," suggested Sigmund Fleisch extremely timidly from another corner of the rug, "I believe certain rumors are circulating, nonofficial naturally, that the Professor in question was not actually dismissed for political activities at all."

"That is *also* correct, Sigmund." Another click. Another incredulous silence. Katzman bent his head to a roll a cigarette. All they could see was his thinning hair and, when he next looked up, the discs of those rimless pince-nez. "I feel I should apprise all present of a singular fact that has come to my attention." He fired his cylinder and appeared to puff on it passively, even cheerfully, for a second.

"Shoot, Sey," broke in Bill Beobach. They could forego the dramatics.

And as facetiously as he could manage Hoyd Rushzak added, "No secrets among thieves."

"It's not wholly unconnected with the—ah—the student beauty contest."

"Beauty contest is *good*, Seymour."

"Seriously," Harvey Spiller cackled quickly, "you realize this competition has been getting terrif national publicity. *Life* did a thing on it only last week."

"Threatens to alter the base of the American girl, huh."

"That's about the end of it."

"Christamighty, man," snapped Lorenzaccio, rocking where he sat, "every wren in the land'll be turning her back on the camera soon." And he sat up, looking as if he were trying to straighten a horseshoe with his teeth.

"Topographical rearguard action, eh."

"Taking a back seat, Harv."

"Un-canny."

"Perhaps we should sit on the matter momentarily," said Mac Hamrin with a weary smile.

"Before we get to the bottom and take it into our hands, you mean?"

"What's sauce for the goose is. . . ."

"I see your point, gentlemen," laughed Katzman uneasily, puffing at his crippled cigarette, "yet if I may—so to say—butt into this unseemly mirth for a moment and continue. The matter may be grave. The editor of *The Eagle* is a young man well

known to me. Last evening, in my absence, he visited with Mrs. Katzman briefly and informed her of a disturbing allegation. One of the participants in this contest has insisted that the reason Orrin Bunch was suspended was that he had made overtures to her last spring term."

Most of them broke into guffaws at this. Though not all.

"Overtures! Oh yes!" Norwell glowed with grins. "Oh, that's rich. Overtures! Orrin!"

"Who's the girl? Does anyone have her now? *I mean.* . . ."

More, and rather heartier, laughter. Plus contingent comment. The latter underlined the grimmer nature of the accusation. Frankly, they all knew there wasn't a hope in hell for the suspended professor, if even a grain of truth lay back of this charge.

"The girl states," continued Katzman, who had permitted himself a modicum of the hilarity, "that Orrin, ah, interfered with her."

"Interfered? How?"

"And where?"

"Yeah. In the vestibule, or on the mouth?"

"The girl swears he, he fumbled with her."

"But where?"

"Everywhere."

"Put his hand up her skirt? I see. Pretty beastly." The way Ned Meilberg pronounced the last two words showed how the allegation had carried more weight with him than with anyone present. Fortified by the Secretary's Scotch, Ned had contributed some of the smuttier sallies in the exchange of repartee.

Suddenly Paul Kristoff stood up. The lean clawing fairy-fighting old age as only a faggot can—was quite pink in the pate and, when he spoke, did so with unwonted indignation: "For all his small disqualities Orrin Bunch was a considerable dear. I refuse to credit these infamous allegations about a trusted colleague."

"But if they're true?" suggested Meilberg.

"I'm *beginning* to think the Department should send a delegation to meet with the Council before Orrin comes up for hearing."

The outbreak was unexpected and Paul sat down in a silence interrupted only by Ned's instant rejoinder: "Don't forget what everyone thought about Hiss. Until Chambers, that is, came forward . . . and heroically . . . and Louis Budenz. . . ."

Alas, if what the girl said were true, it certainly did alter matters. It was extremely likely that "conduct unbecoming" would be precisely CCMCE's phrase to euphemize such misdoings. There had been a case in the very distant past; of course, the man concerned hadn't been seen from that day to this.

"Paul's idea is a sound one," Katzman said quietly. "I recommend it to the attention of you gentlemen."

Hoyd Rushzak was feeling thoroughly confirmed over his own lack of enthusiasm pro-Bunch. Just how much would Orrin have done for him, if their places were reversed? he wondered. Still, he shifted uncomfortably. Marlene was pregnant once more. Today his shrapneled thigh pained him. He would have preferred a warmer clime. And then Axel had loaned him that frightful tome, all documented lists of birth defects in high radiation centers, including dreadful case histories of cleft palates, mental retardation, defects of bone and joints owing to excess fallout over the Union. One couldn't stand by indefinitely. He was, in fact, far from planning to do so.

"All this is very interesting," he now interrupted, "and if Orrin really 'fumbled' a girl it argues sociability, at any rate. Whereas personally I barely got to speak to the man. However, our main problem at the moment seems to be that of removing the Mesrob menace."

"The two are not uninterrelated," cordially cautioned Katzman. "I ought to remind all present that we don't now go into meeting until after Easter."

"I see your point."

Mac Hamrin immediately refilled "pale" glasses. And Katzman

withdrew into his shell, and considered. It was in every way an exceptional situation and he was compelled to play his cards with more calculation than he liked to be conscious of. For he, too, had his sudden problem, and Achilles' heel. The truth was that his daughter Avery had got into a considerable scrape at Sarah Lawrence—a brush with Thanatos involving quantities of sleeping tablets. Things had gone ill with the Amish beau and this incident, hot on Digger's suicide ("a tragedy of our times") over Christmas, had given Katzman the shivers, not to mention many sleepless nights himself. Luckily the matter hadn't received any publicity but it had taught him a lesson; he had suddenly realized he had made a mistake in resigning the Chair, in more senses than by merely demonstrating feeling. No, it was now imperative to get back into power—such as that was—and to receive the reins of Chairman's spy system into his hands once more. Only then could he really protect himself in case of emergency. So he felt directly called to the dossiers of office again: without such he felt a little like Gogol's poor scribe denied the protection of his overcoat. He was initiating the first steps in that direction at this moment.

"I mean to say—what happens when a Chairman goes mad?"

There was energy in the words and all turned to the solved-looking Lorenzaccio who had uttered them.

"Goes—did you say?" inquired one.

"Christamighty," declared the expert on *Aaron's Rod*, a-splutter with Scotch, "if you have a plan, fire. Bombs away, man, bombs away."

Lorenzo had divined exactly. Hoyd now said: "Personally I think Mesrob's mad. Mentally unbalanced, let's say. Put it down to wear and tear of sudden responsibility. In any event he's become unhinged or else he's giving a darn good impersonation of being such. My suggestion is he be encouraged to take a sabbatical in a head-shrinking depot."

There was some anxious laughter, and no demurral, when Hoyd had finished.

"Well, what if he refuses to put himself under—as it were—*psychiatric observation*?"

"That's really what I'd like to put to Sey."

"There is, in fact, no bylaw in provision for that eventuality, I fear," Katzman returned at once. The question was right up his street, tickled his fancy a lot. His opinion of Hoyd Rushzak rose.

"In other words," and Mac Hamrin buffed up a mother-of-pearl button on his vest, "the man hasn't explicitly offended under Silck and that's all CCMCE care about."

"Right," agreed several.

"Next step," said Hoyd, "a committee from among us takes this matter up to higher authority."

"Now wait a minute," came a voice from the back.

And another, "Just whom do you mean by 'higher authority,' Hoyd?"

"If the President won't do anything," he answered, looking more like a pensive priest than ever, "why, I suggest we go ahead and seek a court order for committal ourselves."

Here Norwell Cramm's logorrhea threatened to get under way again, "I think before we go any further, the way, uh, I as it were envisage this thing, our jobs here, in this if you could call instance. . . ."

They let him finish. Hoyd, who had plugged his pipe back into his smile, then said softly, "What think you of the constitutionality of the matter, Sey?"

"It's certainly possible." The ex-Chairman was all but chuckling.

The gathering debated the idea, at first jocularly, but gradually with some increase of attention and pleasure. It really did seem conceivable that, all else failing, they could petition to have boat-rocker Mesrob committed to Bellevue, on the basis of his present behavior, at least for a period of examination. And psychiatric examinations could be extensive.

"He himself would of course be able to petition a *habeas corpus* from the institution of committal," interposed Katzman almost jollily once, "in order to get a sanity hearing."

"Even if his wife were prevailed upon not to consent to such?"

"Just so. An individual may test the grounds on which he is held in that manner. Even against his wife."

"Does such exist?"

"Who knows Madam M.?"

"Roman, you do."

"Did," Roman nipped in defensively.

"I'll see her," Harv Spiller said. "Do you know, all last week I was conscious of a shadowy figure through the glass of my classroom door; I'm convinced it was Mesrob lurking in the corridor and listening in to me. No, I'll go see her all right."

"Preferably when her dear husband isn't there, right."

"Very good." With relief Roman lowered his blue-chip eyes. "Harv is to at once go and courteously talk to Mrs. Mins. Unless she can prevail upon her husband to either resign the Chair or to so obligingly desist from his, ah, unprincipled persecutions, we shall feel unfortunately compelled to immediately seek a court order for committal."

"All right, that's about the long and short of it, Ro."

"Point of precedent." Ned Meilberg's earlobes had turned magenta and his swarthy eyes now scurried simply everywhere. "This is surely something that's never been done before. I feel somewhat worried . . . further thoroughly investigate . . . legal aspects . . . case of the Sobles, of the Rosenbergs, Fuchs you'll recall. . . ."

"Yes, yes, we'll look into the whole procedure, consult a psycho-quack, examine a set of committal papers, don't worry, Ned," said Mac Hamrin, tapping out his pipe. "If this group so desires we can even set up an *ad hoc* committee on the matter here and now."

More merriment, too, at that.

Meilberg was in a minority, it was plain. Even Norwell, lumbering to his legs for the last time, gave an extended address, the general gist of which did seem to be sort of in harmony with Hoyd's surprising proposal. The Chairman had about a month. If

he failed to relax the more fatuous of his regulations by that time, there would be a vote in the Easter meeting calling upon him, from the floor, to resign. If he refused, they now knew what to do.

"Of course," Paul Kristoff concluded, his head a-shine like buttered ivory, "Mesrob must not know about this plan. Should he get wind of our intentions he may well soften the regime for a while, only to lop off our heads next term."

"Well put, Paul." For the first time in his life Harvey Spiller found himself in close agreement with Kristoff. "Another program like the one I'm carrying now and I'm a dead duck."

"You know, I'm rather hoping," Katzman here broke in, with apologetic cough, "that none of this may be in any way necessary."

"How d'you mean, Sey?" barked Lorenzo.

"There are certain advantages to, well," and Katzy paused to clear his throat, "well, to having held the official records of the Department in one's hands for some considerable time."

"And Christamighty, don't think we're not grateful to you, man."

"Did a swell job."

"I think we all only realize just how swell now," said Axel in a decisive way.

"Is Mesrob a citizen?" asked Katzman mildly.

These few syllables struck them all into astonished silence, like comic lightning, to release a number into the thunder of a laugh.

"Brilliant, Sey."

"Pure genius."

"I always knew you had it in you," rollicked Lorenzo who seemed to have been particularly caught by the notion. "Christamighty, man, Christamighty!"

Katzman clarified: "Two years ago I happened to be on a Fulbright jury in Mesrob's field. Now scholars may lie in Guggenheim and Ford and ACLS applications, but the Fulbright is, as we all know, a U.S. Government grant and you are guilty of

perjury if you tell an untruth on your application form for it. Mesrob applied that year—I regret to say, unsuccessfully—and I fear he still is Cambodian."

"Cambodian!" cried everyone.

"That accounts for a very great deal," said a voice in the hub-bub that ensued, during which Bill Beobach hid his face in his hands and uttered a strangled cry, after which he rushed at the Scotch.

"But go on, Sey, go on."

"Well, of course, he has filed declaration of intention—the quota is small, you know—but thanks to a student of mine who, ah, works part time in the Immigration and Naturalization Service it also seems Mesrob had taken out other declarations of intention in the past and let them successively expire. He has, on the other hand, been entirely regular in reporting his address annually, on the proper form supplied for aliens."

"By all of which you mean?"

"At the moment," Katzman continued, "I am trying to ascertain, without undue publicity, exactly what the Council's position is on a noncitizen who has allowed two declarations of intention to expire. Can such declarations actually be considered bona fide, that is, as expressing *intention* any longer? CCMCE allows a seven-year period, I gather, for a noncitizen appointed to the staff of a city college to acquire citizenship. If he has failed to become an American by that time, he is required to leave."

"This, of course, is what we wanted." Mac Hamrin closed the discussion which succeeded Seymour's exposition.

"Christamighty, we have the man right over a barrel."

"It's a beaut'."

"Yes, it does seem as if Mesrob may be teaching here under false pretenses," Katzman amicably agreed. "I should add—none of you will let this any further." The alacrity with which some members assented here sent a chill down Katzman's spine. "Only an *emergency* would have made me reveal it," he said.

But the meeting was breaking up. The "younger men" had

their Damoclean sword. Come Easter, and their Chairman fail to mend his ways, they had him (in Hoyd's phrase) on Mesrob's Fork, or (in Lorenzo's more direct one) "straight by the shorts."

In the general exodus Sigmund was able to buttonhole Katzman and gratefully communicate the fact (which the latter knew already) that Ford had seen fit to allow him his Thursday Bloomsday. Sigmund had just discovered the news at home. There were many congratulations. Hoyd's bun-face pressed forward with especial warmth.

"May I ask you one point, Sey?" he said, in the hearing of all.
"Go ahead."

"If, or should I say when, Mynheer Mins resigns, it is understood you will resume the Chair?"

There was a pause. Seymour Katzman was able to control most things, but the rebellious chemistry of his body mounted a flush to his face at these sweet words. They were so exactly what he had hoped to hear it was as if he had listened to them before and was now taken aback to find them given factual breath. However, he was able to drive down the smile that menaced his lips as he earnestly answered, "I shall accept the will of the majority in the matter, Hoyd."

"Exactly," said Hoyd. And he limped off, sucking at his sodden stem.

As Katzman walked away he saw the pieces coming into place and he knew that with a bit of luck he would be able to do what he had hoped to do a term or more ago—cause a token, at least, of the Department's esteem for Orrin Bunch to go down on the record. Fumbling girls or not. In any case he was suspicious of that story. He thought suddenly of Ivan Vogel. The editor had said he would get to the bottom of the charge against Orrin and somehow Katzman felt he would.

Indeed that fearless youth who had faced Arabs over barbed wire, and even seen a castrated corpse, was sitting drain-legs a-dangle on the "editor's desk" in the student newspaper office

at that moment. They were just off to the printer's. This A.M. (or after Moses) meeting was enlivened by a little beer. Ivan had announced his and Sylvia's engagement to be married.

This surprise had naturally produced the desired effects. Sylvia Hantmann, bearing some radiance within that illumined her with rhapsodic quickness and strange vulnerability this night, was surrounded, congratulated, bussed (over-lengthily by Lewy), congratulated again. Even Ivan's tawny eyes flecked in affection as fastidious Waynett Marsh impressively kissed the back of her hand through the zareba of his growing beard, and for some reason made Sylvia furiously flush. They were still ribbing her now.

“Does the poor guy know she can cook a’ready?”

“I cook chicken beautifully, Tom.”

“Oi, sure,” said Dehl. “Jus’ kill it and peel it, Syl. Your kitchen’s going to be a riot yet.”

“To get back to our muttons,” interrupted Ivan, “just what do you guys *thunk*?”

There was silence for a moment. Then Lewy made a sound like Aristophanes’s frog chorus.

“We going to run another repeat next week?”

“Not under Pantie Mame,” said the editor emphatically.

“Nor that Fabulous Fanny one again,” added Sylvia.

“Well, Fitz seems a cert for first come Carnival now.”

“Is it true you’re acting in the play, Lewy?”

“For my sins.” He added morosely, “A nut named Schochet wrote it. Tommy edited it, thank God. The thing’s unreadable.”

“*That* won’t be a change.”

“So this Fitz can alter her ellipses on the tape at least four inches by a mere deep breath. I mean, you have to measure her by milliboots already. So if Iv’s intending to head a delegation on behalf of Bunch to CCMCE, I mean we do have to make damn sure the kid’s lying.”

“Personally I think she’s got a heart of gold,” said Tommy Dehl.

"Yeah, mainly Richie Weiss's gold," put in Carol Lester quickly. "Where will Weiss be now?" Vogel asked.

"Alpha Pi. They're giving their party."

"Then who'll come over with me to the frat?"

Lewy exchanged a grin with Tommy Dehl. "They don' *like* us over there maybe," muttered the *Tribune* stringer. "Tommy's got too strong wrists."

"Wayne?" continued the editor.

"Sure," said the colored boy. "I'll hunt out Rich."

They debated a few last details, particularly the miscellaneous ads, the so-called "smalls" that always gave a succession of editors perennial headaches. The propriety of a sophomore placing an ad for an Easter Do-It-Yourself kit (hammer, nails, one bearded prophet) was discussed, and the ad disallowed. Ivan finally stood up.

He recapitulated: "Right. So we're agreed on the basic issue, then. In order to get publicity Fitz Sullivan may be telling what's known in the Philo classes, I believe, as a terminological inexactitude. In short, she's lying." He drew the word out. "This Professor Bunch never made any approaches to her at all. She sees the Libermann kid licking her in the contest and simply can't afford it, not with this movie exec's eyes upon her, right? If my theory's wrong, the Bunch agitation drops, completely. He can handle his hearing himself. But if I'm right, and the man wasn't guilty of any misdemeanor involving moral turpitude at all, why then we'll take this delegation into the Council itself, and *demand* to know why in hell the fellow was suspended. The English faculty'll be with us, mostly. And now pardon me," he concluded, "if you people can get that stuff down to the printer's, I'll charge over to the frat to find Richie Weiss and then dig up a nose cone or two for the Defense Department."

He kissed Sylvia (more leering jeers) as she stuffed copy into her Freudianly commodious handbag. She had a way with printers, he knew. In fact, she had a way.

Ivan walked over the cold, moonlit campus with the silent Sports Editor beside him. It was best to work in pairs.

"Anything new in sports?" he asked, more to make conversation than anything else.

"Wull," returned the other slowly, "the lifters bin doin' good. Jerry Blass come first again in the press, snatch, and clean-an'-jerk divisions."

"Jerk divisions, eh. Tell me, is it true they call him Mister Jock-strap, Wayne?"

"Or just Jocko. Y'know, that guy supported more than four times his weight. Amazing for his age."

"For any age."

A wry smile curled the editor's lips. He felt confident as they strolled. The Bunch hearing had been set for just after Easter and already *The New York Times* had used two letters on the affair. Worked up by his own paper, student opinion hadn't been so vociferous since the Communist speaker ban in sixty-two. The Council met at the start of May and Ivan planned to walk in on it with his delegation of discontented students if the outcome of the hearing remained as ambiguous and unsatisfactory as he, personally, believed it would. It was an action that had never been taken before in the history of the city colleges and, as Lewy Jantaneo had grudgingly put it, "We'll be with you, Iv. I mean, like trying to get a job after we've all been slung out of school."

It might come to that, and then again it mightn't. Ivan didn't think it would. He was a firm believer in standing up to bureaucracy. There was a minimum of it in Israel.

"Baby eye. Such meat. Lamp that switch. I lust that jail. Think she'd *yes* me if I tailed the cub?"

Jesse Paul mashed a fist into a palm, then pressed his fingers tight together in the vicinity of his wishbone and crackled all the knuckles. An old high school trick. The girl in the bullfighter

pants skiphop-prancing toward the front windows of the house seemed this semester to have grown.

"Fly right," chuckled Roy Talyacan with "aplomb" from the barber chair beside him, "and you c'n have any these whiney Lincoln sluts. Any time you like."

"Geez, them slacks fit like a skin."

"The kin' we love to touch."

All that afternoon before the party, can-scanning had been the order of the day in Alpha Pi. The brothers considered their parties the great event of the year, far superior to the College Carnival later on, at which, to tell the truth, not a single one of them would be seen dead.

"Prowl *that* potato, Markie!"

And De Vayo slowly grinned. "There goes one chick with plentya *cheek*, as you might say."

"Wunner who made her dress?"

"Prob'ly the police."

While Roy and Jess broke off to enjoy a giggling fencing match with coat hangers, Mark De Vayo watched the pony-tailed poule of Hudibrastic proportions move off, hips alive with the shift and slack of human avoirdupois. He had won rank by his rape. A real hundred-pointer. What's more, none of the frat had seen him beaten up, so the yellowy swelling under his eye had merely added to the kudos. He had given out that this shiner was the royal result of a fist-fight in a Brooklyn bar, as to who had played shortstop, Richardson or Lumpe, in a certain game—"I tellya, I *smacked* the guy, he's *still* going down." In actual fact De Vayo was worried. Anyone from *The Eagle* gave him bellyache. He was quitting college at the end of term and taking a \$175-a-week job in a Dayton engineering firm. This also measurably added to his local prestige. All in all, Mark was looking forward to the evening. His confidence needed a restorative.

The Alliance had now returned to their places. A wheet of cork. The bourbon glugged. They were preparing for the party. To this they had as usual invited a number of celebrities, all

female and most seen in the pages of *Dude, Swank, Gent*, and the like. None of them secretly believed that any of these would come, but it was rumored (by Richie Weiss, no less) that Fitz might make an amazing appearance, toward the "tail" of the evening. This was already a concession; Fitz had been installed in duplex state by now.

"Holy Smoked *Oysters*!" Jesse exclaimed, craning lasciviously. "Them she musta put on with a shoehorn yet."

"I query ya, chick," called Roy through the half-open window. He too hoped to quit this term for a job with the government; as a result, he was already declining to give any answers at all in class, and keeping carbons of his written work. "Take to the hills, fellers. This is the kin' uplift gave Adam his sudden in'rest in apples."

"Whee-whee!" went Jesse by him. "Put a tab on *that* sweater, man, how she get into *that*?"

"Swallowed it. It grew on her."

"Bet she tops forty this term. An' I *don'* mean her age."

"It's the cup-size what counts, Jess."

"And, man, hers runneth over."

It was too much for Mark who had gone to sprawling in muscled, Michelangelesque poses at the back of the room, vaguely wondering if he could win a bit of bread in the Wofford Essay Prize (*Topic*: "Under what conditions would you say that a teacher was being dishonest in his relations with his students, and what could be done to mitigate such a state of affairs?").

"Whassa good word?" He yawned to look. The rump-sprung maiden in question was almost at the window by now, head up, expression icy as Everest before it was climbed. "Y'peelin' that kid?"

"Men at work, men at work," mooned grinning Jesse Paul, whose chief academic contribution this term had consisted in a Blind Date Insurance Scheme run from the house (a "service" frat). "I hear toonder, boy."

"I prefer pears."

"Motivational research," said Roy Talyacan, sipping at his Scotch. "Like surveying operations."

"I know the kid," said Mark predictably. "That's Salibelle Jakolsa. She's *demure*."

For these frat boys demure girls were the kind who had to be whistled at twice. As he spoke the words Mark opened his shirt, ostentatiously scratched his testicles, at the same time as approaching the window. For this was the sort of prey the frat boys enjoyed, young enough to blush but still too young to call a cop. They would let their arms brush against the nipples of such in crowded elevators, grind groins into buxom backsides on subways, or—most often—they would simply squire the chick around campus, two paces behind her wherever she went, uttering suggestive obscenities. They gave vent to some loud ones now, determined to alter their quarry's expression and if possible—the jackpot!—make her cry.

"She too young," said Markie loudly.

"Yeah. We don' want 'em *wetting 'r pants*."

"I baptize ya," roared Jesse Paul, growing more and more excited, "I baptize ya inna name of . . ."

But the girl got by, expressionless, while Mark stepped up his Casanova charade, unzipping his fly, and even suggesting lubricious positions. There wasn't so much as a blink of her eyes. Trained to such perspicuous observation, the frat men knew they hadn't scored and were as determined to let this one have it before she could flip out of earshot as she was to act as if these geeks had never existed. They were giving her the treatment and she knew it.

"Ja *snore*, lovely?"

"Hey, Salibelle! Is it true ya frigid? I mean, I don' wan' get my balls in' uproar all fer nuttin', kid."

"Hey-lo," called Mark De Vayo in a final falsetto, worthy of Restoration drama, "aincha Miss Fatpratt? Din' I meetcha some place? Now, *isn't* that nice? Las' term's Chem class. What nice nates you have, Miss Fatpratt. Or is it maybe Catchsnatch?"

Oh, how they howled with mirth, Mark half-stripped and scraping his belly button. As the babe in vagrant cloth vanished without the reward of so much as a tremoring underlip, the group broke up. The vision had disturbed Jesse Paul, he felt his throat swelling where he stood, a redness round his eyes. He had a sudden longing to rush out and take that big broad bestially, and hurl her to the demons in hell, huge men in her case, masked in leather garments, shining with grease and shit. The illicit power of his own fantasy confused and frightened him. Even Roy's face was quivering "blandly." It sure was going to be a *big* evening, all right.

"Ach, that kid's jus' an exhibitionist."

"She's reckoned to be a good half-miler." Mark was now staring glumly into nothing.

"Yay, yay, I know the kin'. Like the Viceroy ads. I ain' *really* a drum majorette, I'm jus' a social worker from East Orange." All snapping fingers, with sourceless mirth Jess squirmed to where he'd skittered his Qual Chem texts across the floor and fetched out a deck of cards. "A few hands, Roy, what say?"

"Sure. Let's play. Shilla likes the *solvent* type."

He sat down with a grin. Roy had already dressed for the party and dressed carefully, since his "fiancée" was coming. They were getting married in June, mainly so Roy could dodge the draft a trifle longer and continue his parodistic impersonation of a Princeton Great Dane in peace and quiet. He had purchased from Lord Fanshawe, Inc., a sunliner outfit, a sort of African bush suit with brushed gold buttons and starred epaulets. But even R. J. C. Phipps would have had difficulty getting away with the pith helmet, wrapped in a Lancer's pugaree, which Roy had left conspicuously outside, on a bass drum stolen from the Salvation Army. He wore ripple soles and beneath the cherubic face, which had grown somewhat more discontented this term, a Foxcroft tie, carefully loosened.

From where he sat he could, as he played, glance out the

window and see in the street the new car his father had given him as combination graduation and wedding present. Roy thought the combo idea cheap skate but his father, a lame pet-shop owner in the Bronx, had denied himself a vacation throughout his son's schooling in order to save for it. Now, as the first Orgy Eighteen seen on campus, its damascened fenders were nearly always surrounded by a group of Lincoln engineers admiring the six-way power seat, quadrapoise mufflers, gravity-master brake shoes in mother-of-pearl, and Hollywood torqueflite push-button push buttons in mink, to say nothing of the triple-tone real synthetic foam-fabric with which the decorator-interior was functionally upholstered. True, they would have preferred to examine the moon rocket Semele, but for the moment Roy's truck would do. It was for that reason he had wheedled it out of his pop in advance.

Around five the brothers started drifting in and tanking up. Soon after six the sisters came too, and were systematically plied with laced liquor. Dressed with care out of the cheaper New York department stores, they were fed from a hot plate on an orange crate, manipulated by Markie ("The bes' short-order chef in the business, thass all!"). A record player played. Dancing. No crafty quick-step here, however. Tango and cha-cha and twist at Lincoln frat hops were equivalent exercise to playing end in the Army-Navy game, while the uncharted rhythms of jive flung them about in unmistakable abandon fairly regularly. Roy watched, chiefly, with wool-haired Shilla by his side. They had got off to a good start, and felt baulked only by the nonappearance of their own Society for the Preservation and Care of Calipygians' endorsement in the can comp. Richie Weiss was sent to telephone her all the time, with no success. Jesse Paul merely regretted the absence of his vision from a window, Salibelle Jakolsa. He invariably preferred the last girl he'd seen over any other, until he got to know her, and stood balling his fists in his pockets, murmuring from time to time, "Cheez, that was one third rail that *really* sent me."

By ten several girls declared they felt "icky"—and no wonder—and they left. One vast blonde, whose dialogue was dominated by punctuation ("Yes!" "No!" "Really?"), was so completely ignored she quit in desperation. By eleven a hard core of coeds alone remained, girls with names like Dula and Barbara and Zoë and Vangie. The year previously, during particularly hot weather, Alpha Pi had made its annual affair a conventional Splash Bash, each guest having to get drenched (under either garden hose or upstairs shower) at some time during the evening. The Alliance, ardent hydrophiles, had dunked several reluctant darlings and only been sorry they hadn't been able to toss them in mud, as was the tradition in certain universities in the South. Mark had strobed frantically. 1/200 at f/16. Tri-X. Type-B Ektachrome. That cold-hearted hunter of the full-blown foe had caught visions of virgin poses, all tawny pelt and doe-like buds and throbbing roses. But the Dean of Students hadn't cared for this idea any more than he had liked the Fancy Ball the year before that, for which one redhead had poured molasses on her locks and gone as a candied apple (the sticky stuff had got in her eyes and stung—she might *sue the city* still).

Once the girls were swacked this evening, however, the Prior led off with a Sack Rag. Two girls were given a laundry sack and a swimsuit each. Amid continuous ribbing each had to get into her sack and therein change into the costume. The fastest won ten bucks. After a gloriously revealing performance the winner was a soft-faced sophomore called Lesley Zurkowskas, wearing bronze kid sandals and illuminated earrings.

Next, a U-D skirt party was proposed by a now tousled Roy Talyacan. "You're a sack from the waist up, there's nuttin' to it," he explained. In short, the suggestion was that each girl wore her skirt upside-down and was identified, well, *identified*. This suggestion was vetoed. Despite the gin in their cider the girls weren't as drunk as *that*. Not yet. They did gigglingly agree to a sport called Fumbling, however, the Manager's idea. The lights were put out, everyone exchanged external clothing and

then piled helpless with laughter into the center of the room. The blindfold "it" had to find a boy or girl by feel; since everyone was tight, this was principally effected by pinching or squeezing, causing the victim to talk or squeak.

Still, these games palled. The current of sexual possibility was itself demanding of crescendo. It was only kept charged by the forbidden, so that when Forfeits were mooted the men plugged them strongly. The wiser virgins objected. A compromise was agreed upon, a game in which a girl was sent out with hands secured. An officer was selected, went out, returned, then the girl was brought back in. Problem: the assembly had to guess what he had done to her outside, and for each incorrect guess a garment was removed. This game grew reasonably rococo. Jesse Paul, for instance, secured one laughing lower junior by wiring her thumbs to her earrings, and outside the room he wrote his name in lipstick on her tummy. Another brother adorned with boot polish the breasts of an Education Major, whose eyes were closed in drink, and no one was really happy to see stone-cold-sober Ivan Vogel with his swarthy, bearded Sports Ed in tow. Mark De Vayo, in particular, removed himself to the john. Vogel was known to be antifraternities, a misguided man.

"Where the hell's Fitz?" came a cry.

"Prob'lly leadin' a Help Stamp Out Artificial Insemination Crusade for that movie company by now."

"Or a pantie raid on the faculty maybe."

Laughter. Richie Weiss edged owlishly forward, gloomily complaining, "I bin trying to contact her all night."

"Contact! *Huh!*" More squalls.

Vogel sorted things out. Richie, who quite liked the editor, left with him to confab. And somehow the party broke up soon after that. It went down in frat history as a flop. Barely anyone was laid in a back room. Mark De Vayo remained sitting on the toilet seat, hollow with cold. That bastard Vogel. And Lewy Jantaneo. And now there was this new chick he'd . . . fear scooped his stomach. *Screw it!* There seemed to be hundreds of

laws, according to that Dehl sonofabitch. The pen for five years, in Utah three, it was four in Michigan, hell, you didn't go around asking every babe you dated for her birth certificate. She'd looked twenty-two if a day and, goddammit, Mark reflected aggrievedly, it was she who'd wanted to cross into New Jersey in the first place. The bitches. Sluts, he'd like to bust 'em open, one by one. And to think the law was always on their side, too.

Meanwhile Jesse Paul, gallons of hard liquor in his belly, was in a back room that overlooked an apartment house where occasionally you could catch sight of a weary woman undressing. Every now and then he put a cracker to his lips. Down below he could hear a dee-jay cajoling out another platter by The Boas—*Keep Away While I Play* (“Teach start riding you, kids, rock this one right back at her!”). He was debating what to do. In truth, Jesse had always been terrified of impotence and the majority of his orgasms had been at Italian movies. So he stayed behind, giggling staunchly over his Scotch, every now and then chucking Cheez-Bits at the light fixtures, recalling his days in the Army and *longing for a war*.

“I say the lodge password or something?” asks the expectant youth of the gray-haired maid who lets him in the duplex. Gestures at twin doors which photoelectrically swing.

Enters indicated salon with gingerly tread, hushed mirrored antechamber to greater glory, so it seems. Another hingeless (Herculite) swing and soundlessly he steps into holy of holies. Richie's eyes widen. He knew she'd hit pay dirt, but this was something else again.

The place is a padded cereal box with Napoleonic green in the décor—in some misplaced marshmallow desire to emphasize the Du Barry role, or is it “the Irish in her” yet?—and there on striped teak floor, in the precise center of a white white rug, sits Fitz in shortie to “receive” him.

“Sugar-boy,” she says.

Dumbfounded he gasp-gazes, quizzical eyebrows climbing bow forehead—"I *called* you, kid."

She sits like some sallow fly trapped on the surface of a pool of cream.

"Sil-ly. You know I never answer after seven." Dimpling (almost everywhere) she points. Textbook on chair. *Rings of Real Functions*. Even she has to study.

"Hey, Fitzie," he tries, "'m I in the bottom of a fishbowl or sumpin'? Gee Whiz!"

Inkblack poodle advances sniffing. Richie backs. Fitzgeraldine smiles. The air is fumed with essences.

"Silly boy. Amour won't bite you."

"No? Well, the way Amour had his leg in the air like that, I jus' didn't want for him to kick me, that's all."

"Come sit down, Rich."

"I sure will. Gee, you've certainly 'struck it sweet.' So you didn't come tonight."

"I *couldn't*."

Beside her on peerless rug, under awning tasseled like a how-dah, lowers his tub of torso, in its three-quarter-length Lincoln coat. Distantly music neighs, something from *Pagliacci*. Along one wall is a colossal photo-mural of—yes!—Fitz, showing her for some reason hanging by her wrists from a tree. Two crystal tears. A wincing smile. He gazes on.

RICHIE

Jesus! What are your measurements, Fitz? I mean, jus' give 'em me slowly, and let them "sink in."

FITZ

Seriously, lover, you *like* it? The tests were great. It's going to be a very vivid vehicle set south of the border.

RICHIE

You going to Mexico, Fitz?

FITZ

For *The Cat People*, sugar-boy. Maybe the sequel, too.

RICHIE

What's that?

FITZ

The Cat People Tomorrow. Julius hasn't approved the *exact* title yet.

Silence. She moves. Rustle of nix. One garment wings. Moist of lips. And bistréed eyes. Black velvet fillet on the darkened tress. Armand's Du Barry. Everyone's Fitz. He warbles the singsong of music a minute.

RICHIE

I mean, this guy really got a hurt for you, Fitz? Tell me straight now. You coming back to town when you've run the "thespian scene" down there?

FITZ

Oh Julius has promised me one of these new new pools when we go West. It's sculpted in your image like. A kind of portrait, really. Only first I got to do six months in one of his Tabby Clubs.

RICHIE

What! You let him schmeikle you into that!

FITZ

It's for the publicity. The girls get dressed like cats.

RICHIE

Pussies, huh. Well, they shouldn't need many sittings to design that pool, not with *those* pix aroun'.

FITZ

Isn't it just *terri-bull* what some girls don't wear in the magazines these days. Oh squirrel, isn't it *exciting*, I signed the contract at Le Pavillon last night, and on the right side of the room, too. I'm going to play this mouse right into the hole. Now let's break a bottle of bubbling shampoo, dear one.

RICHIE

For Chris' sake cut out that gab, will you. Talk sense for a second. I have something to ask you. Serious, mind. It's—from the boys.

F I T Z

Julius jus' wants for me to succeed, see. And at the same time he gives me this personal terrific-type lift.

R I C H I E

So I'm the John who "knew you when."

F I T Z

He's so naïve.

Pronounces it *nave*. He yields in resignation, shrug of shoulder pads as she rises, rises endlessly—tweak in peach-cleft, flutter behind—shortie shifts to ice bucket, spins champagne.

Richie can't believe it. Drapes of aqua fiber glass shroud one wall, a mirror framed in brilliants, there is a reproduction of Rouault's *The King* (maybe it's even the original yet), plus two pictures she now tells him are avant-gardely licked on by the tongue ("heticular entoptic entelechies"). Richie stands erect, accidentally trips circuit which swoons out prodigious ottoman, tomato-hued. He kneels, sways in (Mahomet) prayer. From tinkling bucket, bottle like a wheel of roulette, she laughs with whip of ass, waggles one finger most playfully—"Naughty naughty. Mama spank."

While she decorks, then pours, the tawny juice, Richie spends some technical moments expertly appraising the engineering.

"What a wiring job!"

It's good. All the same, it somehow isn't real. Can be blown away in a flash, this set, with its attendant, unsubstantial fiction. One Bronx Vocational High School kid, bloated from an abundance of halvah, converted into a Hollywood houri, over whom the world now yelps in unison, at the ringmaster's crack. Suddenly to make millions a year because her clothes are full of her. No tabloid complete these days without a picture of Fitz's stern.

Green leather phone purrs, emitting the indiscretion of an undone zipper. And so he wanders, portly, quizzing. Knocking on walls, sliding aside drive-in closets big enough to hide Buicks

in, each revealing banks of perfect plastic clothes containers. Frankly, it's spooky. A set of Scrabble on a marble table.

"Lannie *pet*," he hears her say, "just you be there at ten tomorrow and I'll be there, too."

When she's done he asks, "You mean you actually *know* her?"

She turns her back. (Her back.) He crosses, close.

RICHIE

Fitz, you're the minkiest.

FITZ

Oh, I'm just a gay granny. No, please don't do that, boychick.

RICHIE

Cut out the craptalk, willya. Hey, did I tell you I been elected Treasurer of the Class? Not bad, huh?

FITZ

Please, Rich. I tol' you. Things are different now.

RICHIE

Your poodle's gnawing my leg again. Prob'lly needs someone to feed it meat.

FITZ

Poor Amour! Here, Amour! *Down!* (Giggles) Faust's poodle.

RICHIE

I don' get it.

FITZ

You will, you will. You're just *nave*, that's all.

RICHIE

Things are differen' not because you love him, right, Fitzie? But because you *love the marks*.

FITZ

Oh, don't ride me, Rich, that's all I say. I'm not Jesus Christ, nor Mary Magdalen neither. (Suddenly swears at dog) Oh, leave me alone, Amour. Get to hell out.

RICHIE

A fussy mutt. So there's something I have to ask you before I do blow, Fitz. You fixed that story against Bunch, din't you?

Wasn't it for the publicity, the lights, wasn't it for the "great cause," I mean? Bunch never done nothing unwise, never done nothing "unbecoming" in your direction at all, did he?

F I T Z

Oh Rich . . . (half in tears) . . . I don' know, I don' know what I ought to say, really I don't.

R I C H I E

When Sue Libermann started closing in on ya in the comp you put this out to the press, right? I mean, your press agent dug the idea and he flinked to *Eagle* and from there on. . . .

F I T Z

Yes yes yes yes. Is that what you want? (Crying, sobbing, she beats the air with solid arms) He *never touched* me. Now go, get out. Get to hell out. I did it, yes.

Richie regards her, waiting. Watching the glinted hair flip from velvet, mouth writhing at its corners. Suddenly, fresh air needed.

"The girl on a hot chinchilla stole," expressionlessly he says. "Slightly not a beast, huh. Excuse me, but I've got to catch a six o'clock Mass."

Before he turns he sees the puckered crying mouth, the sow-pursed "little girl" lips so elaborately made up into their sutured wound, the spiked lashes, the nose "bobbed" now and resembling an old-fashioned three-cornered bayonet. The whole thing absolutely phony and destined to end in total disaster. "Baby" eyes bleed with tears. Out of this priestly aisle. Away!

"All I wanted to know," he says.

A stack of Lincoln drop cards on one oriental tray.

Richie goes. A pulse thumps sullen in that owlish head, he spits on rug, roading for the door smashes free-form glass partition in Fitz's massy shape (poodle barks, consternation of maid), kicks cushion, pouches his bleeding palm. In his path the cushion splits like an ice floe. (Poodle plays with.) Behind him hears her calling a Los Angeles Granite exchange. No one to blame, no

one to blame, he repeats to himself as the elevator sinks, no one to blame at all. Forget it, Pagliacci, ah forget it now.

EAGLE MISCELLANEOUS ADS

MAZEL TOV

To Sue ("Geneva") Libermann and Edward Drosa

On Your Engagement

Staff of Raymond's

The Sols and Johns and Sys were buddying around the English Department office over in Calhoun. It was exactly four days before the Bunch hearing, so time was running out. Mesrob had been heard moving about his office by Miss Wilmer for hours before the meeting, humming to himself and slamming books down on his desk. Now a cry for "cahbahn" copies of something or other from everyone-knew-whom was going unacknowledged. A diversion had been created around Julia, who had lately lost an ear to a strong frat cat (feline).

Strange, reflected Katzman as he observed the throng, how when individuals developed speech idiosyncrasies they became evident to the exclusion of that said. How many times by now had one heard Enoch Appius declaim on "Frawst's *ruts* in Boston"? A lexicographer noticed that. By good luck, and not a little management, Seymour had been able to disentangle himself from the others and was standing alone, pince-nez confronting a grubby wall whereon had been written ELIAHU LOVES JANICE under *Misery Loves Company*. He was worried, very. Not about Avery now. No, the Vivisection Investigation League had come under fire from some wild man in the West and he had instantly dissuaded his wife from donations. And today there was more, oh, much more. He went on up.

Outside Convocation Room, already milling with the beginnings of a meeting unanimously expected to concede fireworks, he caught hold of Hoyd-Mac Hamrin being pipishly engrossed in affairs of state on the podium.

"Hoyd, I do have one item I feel I should urgently . . . what I mean is," he completed more hastily than normal, "Mesrob's a citizen."

"He is!"

"The student I know in Immigration and Naturalization informed me so yesterday. There's no possibility of error. Dates, everything."

"But if he's only become such recently, doesn't that still mean he's been teaching here for years under false pretenses?"

Katzman shrugged. There was an alarming hesitation behind his pince-nez. Hoyd caught it intuitively. "Oh well, possibly, CCMCE might regard the offense in a retroactive manner; on the other hand, they very well might not. After all, he's now demonstrated a degree of loyalty by swearing to support the Constitution."

Hoyd did an elaborate groan. "Sey, I can scarcely support myself. Hell, this puts us right back to seeking a court order for committal, it's our only resort if nothing else turns up today. Right?"

Katzman rapidly shook his head. "It'd be wisest to hold our hand in the meeting." In the press of colleagues it was becoming increasingly difficult to exchange confidences; still, he bent his thinning head to Hoyd's wide ear. "I suggest you *pass the word around*. You see, after some fairly extensive research into the matter, I have developed considerable fears about the efficacy of having anyone committed. The legal aspect, I mean."

"But we've got to get rid of him!" Hoyd exploded.

The other, however, was already moving with self-conscious serenity, and an affable smile, to the senior seats in front. Katzy's mask was on.

And now Harvey Spiller had come bouncing up, gripping Sigmund Fleisch at a wilted lapel. The eager Creative Writing teacher went in, explaining how he had a student writing a novel entirely from the point of view of a dentist's chair; it was to be

the longest interior monologue on record and he needed Sigmund's Joycean hand. Hoyd whispered to them the bleak news concerning Mesrob.

This time as the members took their seats, under the sphinx of a blackboard problem that showed the recent presence of some Physics squad, they presented a very different set of faces from those gathered the previous September. After Easter (the word "break" or "recess" acquired sarcastic overtones at this stage of the year) all Lincoln teachers were utterly exhausted. Not only did city college teachers have far longer hours than any of their academic colleagues, they had by now psychologically finished the term, were already making summer plans, at a moment when in actual fact they were in for the toughest teaching weeks anyone could know.

A succession of erratic weekends, late nights grading papers, too much liquor and too little exercise, had taken their toll. These men, with the exception of those fairies paying more attention to the waistband than *The Waste Land*, looked far older than any eight months had the right to make anyone look. And already the first of the term papers were drifting in, bureaucratic documents a Soviet subcommissar would have envied, papers that had to be read to be believed, for the Lincoln student was a staunch believer in matter over manner. What was worse, these early ones usually arrived enclosed by innumerable dainty paperclips or simply stapled silly, bound derisively in buckram, all devilishly typed, fiendishly footnoted, bibbed with abandon, and in general terms impracticably impeccable. These packaging jobs were never handed back, of course, they would only find their ways into fraternity files, to be submitted by subsequent generations of huddled masses yearning to be engineers, to other overworked and unsuspecting professors of the future. Tensely sandwiched between Harvey Spiller and a man he had never seen before (so thought a spy), Sigmund had corrected his first two already—one on Chas Dicken's *Great Affectionations*

and another, bound in bobby-pins, on Coleridge's "Digestion Ode." He was getting ready to wrestle with his Bell Curve gradings, always an agony. The meeting moved under way.

It was a short one, principally since there were no matters of no moment to drag out their discussions. The Chairman came fairly sharply to the expected point—their collective support for suspended Dr. Bunch come Tuesday. No one spoke.

Someone asked: "Did Orrin sign the oath required by the National Defense Education Act on entering, anyone know?"

"Orrin didn't know an H-bomb from a firecracker," a voice rather irrelevantly returned.

"Don't you be so sure," said another.

"SonofaBirch," muttered another.

Mesrob did not know the answer, and looked as if he didn't care. He was all air and fire today. And after some silences, broken only by a few futile questions, he irreverently spat out—"Second?"

No one knew what on earth he was talking about, since there was no proposal on the floor. Hamrin scratched his head over the minute book and appeared about to intervene. Mesrob looked livid. Then, as if acting by reaction to the silence about him, in the same passionate tone he had used for the identical vocables so many times in the past, he cried out loudly—"I *resign!*"

But when this time the puce pendulous head lifted Byronically, to savor their astonishment, it was to see a figure on his feet claiming the floor. This was the Jungian expert, Bill Beobach, looking tersely unkempt yet curiously purposeful. Mesrob sat down more in surprise than anything.

"I feel sure the Department is greatly sensible of the debt owed Professor Mins during his period of office," Beobach calmly began. "But since it is his wish to relinquish these—alas—only too onerous charges, it is surely our duty to respect his decision. I move we accept our Chairman's resignation, er—with regret."

There was an instant second—from Axel Maine—succeeded by

a unanimous chorus of "Aye"’s and before Mesrob was really aware of it, Mac Hamrin, bent over a beautiful vest, had the resignation firmly in the minutes.

"The next order of business," incorrigibly continued Bill Beobach, "would then seem to be the election of a new Chairman of Department. I propose Professor Katzman."

Stony-faced, Seymour watched the teller inscribe his name on the board. It was the only one.

"Nominations from the floor?" yelped Mesrob in a kind of panic. "Nominations from the floor?" For even he couldn't nominate himself.

R. J. C. rose to his feet. "I propose Professor Hill." He sat down.

"Don't mention Enoch, I just ate," whispered a junior man at the back.

The proposal of Enoch indeed received no second.

For once the fairy wing was united with the younger men and the combination was unbeatable. A comparative study, by *The Tailor and Cutter* say, of the dress of R. J. C. Phipps and Paul Kristoff would have at once yielded the key to this. The careerist costume of the publishing pimp was "vulgar" to Paul and his ilk, and "vulgarity" and "bad taste" were the cardinal sins in the code of the half-world inhabited by these very bland popinjays. Incompetence, yes, but if one were found lacking in "taste" he became a Cain of his kind, disinherited for ever. It was an iron law, and even Phipps bent his pompadour before the silence of the assembly.

The "secret" votes were collected. Katzman was restored to power. Silent, armed once more, Katzy left Convocation Room tidily concealing his feelings and even pausing in the Department office to pick up his mail, in which would be Roman Gladberg's last chipper offprint, almost certainly on "The Ambivalent Dialectic of Sneezing in the Eighteenth-Century Coffeehouse."

Once outside the college, however, Katzman moved quickly to a pharmacy phone booth. An external line was essential for

what he had to say. For now was the time for all good men to come to the aid of the party. Incautious—even incredible—as it might seem to those familiar with his habits, Katzman had become closely devoted to the cause of Orrin Bunch and there were moments when he had always adjudged attack the best method of defense. Such a moment was now. Thus, as Chairman once more, he was intending to join the delegation to CCMCE. Surely no harm could come of that.

For Vogel had announced that three students would descend on the distant Laight Street office where the Council held its periodic deliberations; they would go down and demand justice—in the form of an overt explanation, once and for all, for the peremptory dismissal of the so effective professor. Katzman proposed to join them with two, maybe three. Axel Maine had already promised assistance, and he felt sure Axel would be an Associate Professor by next January.

Then the bombshell fell. It was to go through the college like a dose of salts the following morning. Ivan's even voice now said:

"Professor Bunch is not appealing. Yes, sir, I know a man at the *Times* and it's official, all right. There'll be no hearing now."

"But this is impossible, Ivan." Katzman was as close to bubbling as he'd ever been. "Why, why, in such cases, in the very nature of the thing, it's a tacit admission of guilt. Yes indeed. If he accepts the suspension without appeal, it'll . . . why, it'll look terrible. And we'll never know just what he did wrong. Allegedly, of course."

"I've been on to his lawyer, sir. He wouldn't comment, but there's absolutely no doubt about it. The man's withdrawn his appeal."

"And at the last minute like this." Katzman was staggered, shaking his head within the booth. It was inconceivable of Orrin, disastrous.

"However, sir, we still feel we ought to walk in on Council

at their meeting and demand some statement." Vogel paused imperceptibly. "Would you still be with us in that?"

Katzman almost snapped, "Well, well, I'll have to think it over, let you know."

"You do that, sir." And Ivan Vogel smiled.

Ten

The Odyssey was pleasing at time, but I didn't appreciate the excessive immorality that was repeated throughout.

Axel looked at his watch. Time to go. He put the term paper aside and stood up. A Mr. Arkushan, all set to teach good Pershing rifle behavior on the moon no doubt, had graciously concluded his essay: "However I feel that the main reason for my going with Homer was that the author did not 'talk through his hat.'" There seemed hundreds of these left. A Mr. Blass had felt sorry for Plato ("women belong in the home"), while Mr. Tunc Witkowsky had made the usual, unhappy orthographic confusion between Goneril and gonorrhea. He stretched his arms and took out the letter and reread it.

From the helm of his well-paid Department in Ohio the Chaucerian had bid him come. Would Axel accept? Here was his long-sought answer, his chance to get Beth out of the city and away from what Yeats had termed "the abounding gutter." He ran a hand over his features. Hell, why couldn't you become a Mormon and acquire multiple wives, each deductible at \$600 per? But, no. The thought sent him scuttling in to Beth, writing at that moment her weekly missive to the Brigadier. She looked lovelier than ever in his eyes.

"When do I expect you back, dear?"

Axel shrugged. "May take a bit of time. The Council is meet-

ing at six and we plan to walk in on 'em a half hour later. I'll get back soon as I can."

Too, he knew he would. He kissed her warmly. Little elfette, after all. She wished him luck. Axel's eyes flickered over the Martini shaker, then the Greek invitation card to the College Carnival, and he went quickly out.

It was a small delegation and they were to meet at Katzy's place, to be ferried to Laight Street where CCMCE leased a chamber, so it seemed, from some sort of club. The Blue Skies Yacht Club was to be the scene of the eminent Council's final deliberations for the year. With Bunch's withdrawal of appeal it appeared highly likely (according to well-informed Seymour) that he had indeed violated in some manner the Code of Ethics, to which some 225,000 city workers had to subscribe. In what way he had done so they felt it their duty to discover that evening.

They were to consist of two students, four faculty—Chairman Seymour, Lorenzo, Hoyd Rushzak and Axel. Mac Hamrin had asked to come, but with Hoyd's last-minute decision to take their side it was felt that the younger element in the Department might be overstressed. They wanted the appeal for information to look as general as possible.

Axel reached this gathering of clans by subway. As he traveled he mulled over the offer from Ohio. It was a nice small college and, so he had learned during the MLA meeting, its English Department numbered no more than fourteen. Tempting. And during the period when Mesrob had been driving them nuts, he'd probably have taken it like a shot. Now he wasn't so sure.

He thought of his papers again. All that simultaneous worship of the romantic and technological, that adulation of the titanic qualities inherent in the instinctual and industrial. It was the end product of Baconian-Hakewillian science that was being so wildly celebrated at colleges like Lincoln, the synonymity of moral and material welfare. Progress! He wished he could sometimes even *think* he agreed with it.

Lorenzo was standing on the stoop when he got there. The

man looked older, his favorite pipe slightly more broken. "What the hell, Ax," he said at once. "Hear you're leaving us. Stout feller."

How on earth the Lawrence expert had got hold of the information, Axel didn't know.

"Fact is, you get stuck," went on the other, fidgeting over the sidewalk, while Axel stared at his shoes. "Christamighty man, can't think why I haven't shoved off before myself. Every time I strip for the shower I look to see if I've got that PROPERTY OF THE CITY sign stamped on my back as yet." He ho-hoed a bit and gabbed about his summer plans, another visit to the Taos ranch. "Sey's upstairs with Hoyd," he concluded, and Axel saw the two students standing near their car. "He'll be right down."

"About this move you imagine I'm making, Lorenzo," he said. "It's not on."

"What!" For a second the man scrubbed at his rabbity crop, did a sort of daemonic dance-step, gripping his pipe, then he gave Axel the look appropriate for someone going in for life. "You don't mean to say you're *staying on*."

"That's right."

"Darn tootin'," was all Lorenzo said, after a speechless moment. "You must be crazy."

They chatted some more, mainly about Seymour's beautifully smooth resumption of interrupted duties, then the Chairman himself came down, accompanied by Hoyd, greeted them perfunctorily and they piled in the Chevy. Axel was squashed in back, between a nervous Hoyd and a very solid text entitled *Singularities of Thom Polynomials*. They were silent as Jantaneo drove, the stoplights flowing by like the recurring decimal of an endless sum. They were all far more anxious than they'd expected to be. Once Ivan Vogel leaned back and showed them a pull of the coming edition of the student paper:

MISS SUPERIOR POSTERIOR
The Frail with a Tail

Fitz Sullivan, forthcoming starlet, had finally clinched the comp, it seemed, and appeared in the front-page glory of diaphonous panties across the seat of which had been embroidered *Please! Love Pats Only!*

"Hell," snapped Lorenzo, "there's been nothing like this since the Hottentot Venus."

There was some cute copy about backs of laps, all of which was surveyed by each of them with gloom.

The driver proved the sole exception. "Howja like that crack about the rump-us room? I wrote that."

But in Laight Street he parked erratically, cursing hard. They got out jumpily and looked at the building. Axel took the opportunity of congratulating *The Eagle* editor on his engagement; he wondered whether Sylvia had told of their dinner date and somehow suspected not.

"Together we stand, divided we fall," said Hoyd with his sarcastic smile.

"'atsa good line for a brassiere ad," said Lewy Jantaneo. "Aw, c'mon, we'll put the bells on 'em." And he strode forward, hitching at his denims.

It had previously been agreed that Seymour Katzman would do the talking, however, and he led the way now. The Blue Skies Yacht Club hadn't owned a yacht in half a century, and for most of that time had seen no blue skies, either. Such tenuous connections of nomenclature remained relatively unfathomed by all. They soon found that the place occupied three or four floors of a busy building, used by shoe wholesalers and some women's organization. They were on the early side, they saw.

Not even Katzman had ever met a member of the ten-man Council in person. Naturally all had seen their faces in the papers, associated with this or that pious platitude concerning civic education. But they felt more and more apprehensive as they ascended in the elevator—perhaps half of CCMCE were riding right beside them. They never knew.

The elevator spurned them directly into locker rooms. These

were sauna-hot and soon had the student members of the delegation shedding their jackets. There was a sickly odor lying over all. In the center, about a table, sat a number of short, generally bald gentlemen in towels, sipping Scotch. A thumping came from somewhere. As no one took any notice of them Katzman went forward. A locker boy looked up, said, "Sure, in here," and led them to a group of cubicles over which hung a sign, VISITORS ONLY.

"Ah, I'm not sure you entirely understand," Seymour began.

"You're the team from New Jersey, ain't you?" said the boy crossly.

"No, indeed. What we are endeavoring to find is Room 19-A, where the, er, *educational* Council is meeting."

"Two floors up." And the boy disappeared at a baying for ice.

The elevator had clashed open again and more men in implacable suits had suddenly turned into Eastern potentates around the central table. The delegation from Lincoln was growing very nervous. The time was now 6:10.

The first door Katzman opened gave onto a scene from a bad Blake engraving, or Henry Moore shelter sketch. Either side a sweltering dormitory, reeking of liniment, lay obese bodies, each third or fourth pummeled by a masseur. Katzman retreated and asked the way of a bald man coming from a shower.

They had to climb a fire stair. The thumping increased. The next door their leader tried guarded a room of throbbing engines, watched by a colored mechanic who greeted them heartily. And the next, still higher up, showed a short swim pool through whose greenish flakes a freckled bowl was moving—up and down, down and up. Lorenzo watched the swimmer with absorption—"Jove! Wouldn't mind a dip. At that."

Growing more and more uneasy, they navigated yet further steps, eventually emerging into an area of a central ramp round which were sunk several squash courts and miniature gymnasiums. The din was deafening. Roars arose as some tin clanged merrily in a corner. There was a piano playing somewhere. And

if it was hot in the locker room, here it was an inferno. While Seymour struck off in the direction of responsible advice Axel peered into one of these sullen wells.

To his surprise the whitewashed arena had been set up for ping-pong. Two tubby naked patriarchs were playing each other fast, and both becoming *very cross* in the bargain too. Beyond them a hairy demon in a headguard (and nothing else) shadowboxed, grunting, against a wall. Just visible in the well beyond this a rank of convicts in colorless sweatsuits performed callisthenics under a blond instructor standing on a table; nearby a suited oldster tinkled an upright piano, at both ends of which jutted American flags.

"This is ridiculous," said Hoyd behind him. "Where's Seymour got to now?"

It was a question. The place was a bedlam. And the clock was moving on. Finally, looking very hot and bothered behind his pince-nez, Katzy appeared and pointed upward. Once more they panted after him up the fire stairs. There was a door to a passage at the end of which a sign said GOVERNOR'S ROOM. The Chairman turned, rallied the ranks. CCMCE, it seemed, were meeting behind that very door. It was 6:18 exactly. Orrin Bunch himself would have been proud of their timing.

Katzman knocked and, hearing no answer, knocked loudly again and then went in. It was an almost sylvan scene that met the delegation, a large lounge all leather chairs and resorbent pile and slapping copies of the *National Geographic*, the whole staked out by blinding Old Glories. But of human occupation there was not a sign. Nor did it look as if anyone had been in there recently, either.

"Christamighty, we're too late." Lorenzo, who had worked himself up exceedingly in their calvary through the club, was puffing on his pipe, moving his feet in a ridiculous rhythm nowhere.

"Wrong day maybe," suggested Jantaneo.

But Katzman was convinced there was no mistake. "I am posi-

tive the meeting was taking place this evening. And in this room, also." A copy of a State Education communication ("Special Committees—Meetings") confirmed him; other documents of the ilk, including *Regents Rules on Subversive Activities* which Katzman knew by heart, were seen readied on a table, too.

Vogel agreed—"There's no error here."

Perhaps they were early then. "A trifle *keen*, maybe," as Hoyd half-heartedly put it. They decided to dig in and wait.

They did so until eight o'clock, periodically dispatching an increasingly disgruntled Lewy Jantaneo through the Blue Skies Yacht Club to find out if anyone knew anything about the missing Council. No one did. Once Lewy reported a wry look from a telephonist, plus two attempts to rope him into handball games, but that was all. At eight Katzman declared the delegation adjourned, pending further information.

"I'll buy that," said Lew. "There's on'y two-hour parkin' in this street."

The information they sought was forthcoming the following morning. It was on the front page of *The New York Times* and prominently featured in papers outside the city. In fact, for several days it threatened to bury most of local higher learning. The Board of Ethics had "come across" certain facts which had led them to fire seven members of CCMCE itself! The other three had resigned—whether in terror or protest, no one yet knew. Nothing like this had been known before in the history of municipal education in America, and Katzman himself stared long and, yes, you might almost say *lovingly* at the amazing story in the *Times*. Was this someone's idea of a joke?

Evidently not. It was a clean sweep, the entire Council gone. What the details were they'd have to wait to learn. But as things stood at the moment there just wasn't any higher educational authority around at all. The scandal sat right on the back of the Mayor. As the morning wore on, indeed, there were even rumors afloat from the library that the State Commissioner himself was rocky. These, of course, were instantly quashed. Still,

this was it. By comparison the Slochower case at Brooklyn was a tempest in a teapot. So the members of the English Department taught foggily on, a very tired generation waiting for its sign. Appropriately enough this came—for those who understood—in Carnival Week.

Seated in the packed auditorium, awaiting the highlight of the Carnival in Winey, Hoyd Rushzak now gave a smile no more of sarcasm, but rather of complicity. He too had made his insolent decision and, though the opposite of his pal Axel's, it had made him feel as he had felt in the war, about to play a part. No more peddling textbooks. Why, he would even think again out there. He had the steamship tickets for the whole family now. Ah, how often had he waked in the early hours just lately, at the cry of this bawling brat or that, and his imagination conjured a distant world of dazzling plateaus, those ice floes dried with salt, seared by a sun strong as an ax, across whose hallowed, promised terraces men moved, inspired by fire, with an immemorial dignity. The men of his race. His smile deepened. He even thought affectionately of Kipling's "Et Dona Ferentes." Maybe Marlene would learn to shop cheaply in Jerusalem, too. His eyes roved over the audience as it awaited the tardy playlet.

Off to his right, across a carpet of prayer caps, Norwell Cramm, very much "in public," thus looking more like a constipated calf than ever. Old Elmer Pin beside him. (Norwell would get a good parking space next year.) Directly behind, a hassle of Engineering professors (the transparent-shirt and tussore-suit manufacturers doing great trade in this area), their crushed-clerk faces arguing hard about the musical problems of Mozart's *Litaniae Laurtanae* in D. Straight ahead, a gossip of young Physics profs, sucking dead pipes, their wives (or aspirant facsimiles) exchanging gup concerning infant formulas. In fact, the pipe was here a distinction of rank, like the tonsure of monks.

At occasions such as these it was hard indeed, thought Hoyd, not to agree with J. Robert Oppenheimer's view that, far from

being isolated in a university, the reverse was the case; today the university represented a microcosm of public activity. After all, the Lincoln English teacher was made daily aware of the presence (far too proximate at times) of biologists, chemists, geologists, in a way he most certainly would not be in normal business life beyond the academe. The latest Federal Government outlay for academic research had been nearly half a billion dollars, of which 95 percent had gone to science. Meanwhile, the atmosphere of general philistinism was increased by men teaching the sciences in pidgin English. Once again inarticulateness was accorded prestige. Now Hoyd spotted colleagues other than Cramm in the cram.

There—Paul Kristoff, his gleaming dome entrapped, twitching, between some members of the Maintenance Department. Poor Paul. There—Harv Spiller. There—Enoch. He turned his attention to the program. To the mewing of some inaccurately played Music Department cello music the hem of the curtain had begun to glow and the insistent lettering **PROPERTY OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK** became bathed with the upward flood of light.

Courtesy CCMCE
THE TRAGEDY OF SAM CUTLET
By William Sliderule
Alias Stanley Schochet

Edited by **TOMMY DEHL**
Dedicated to **THE PRESIDENT**
Censored by **THE DEAN**

All Proceeds to the Vivisection Investigation League

CAST

SAM CUTLET, a lower sophomore.....	Phil Arkushan
MARY O'PHELIA, Cutlet's chick.....	Tucky Blein
HORACE RATIO, Cutlet's sideman.....	George Liemen
PAUL ONIUS, of the English brass.....	Lewy Jantaneo
GERT RUDE, others . . .	

ACT ONE: SCENE ONE

SCENE: A small apartment: Cutlet reading a text in front of the television set: Mary O'Phelia darns a pair of socks at his feet.

CUTLET. O, that this too too solid book would melt. I'm hooked, baby, and I don' mean maybe. How weary, stale and unprofitable seem to me all the uses of this differentiation. Fie on't. 'Tis but a month, nay not a month, doll, since I entered Math 5 and a'ready I'm hung-up on integral co-synes.

MARY. Cutlet lover one, e'en tho' we be in the same Math combo, I cannot aid ye. 'A spend too much time on 'a other courses. In that Intro to Lit 2 art forever bucked on *Hamlet*. Here. Take these notes and my homework, perhaps they'll help ye fly.

CUTLET. Nay, I'll not take thy notes.

MARY. Alas, rich gifts wax poor when the receivers prove unkind. There's only one hope left, Pops.

CUTLET. What's the ribble?

MARY. Got thee to a tutor.

CUTLET. And for bread? Thou art naught.

MARY. Nought point one recurring. Get thee to a tutor, buy the bit, and blow a new sound, angel.

(Enter RATIO, with Cokes.)

RATIO. Hi! Min' if I horn in here? Have a Coke. How's the love kick, cats?

MARY. Snagged.

RATIO. So? Aha! I see the culprit is the Calc tome. Drown it, Sam, burn that bad book, boyo. Just stash the tag and let it swing, man. I've seen York down in Wino, drop card in hand.

CUTLET. Alas, poor York. I knew him, Horry. No, I fear I'll have to drop my Calculus too.

RATIO. Hell no. *Lisserndtermee!* I mean, catch this act, and draw thy breath in pain to hear my tale.

CUTLET. Wise me, Horry.

MARY. And clue me in too, you drag.

RATIO. Then lend a lobe. Only one day after my final in English 2 last half I received my mark, and but a C at that. I am sure I deserved more, much more. And how! Does it seem possible, cats, that within twenty-four hours my prof could have read our papers

and returned our grades? Something is rotten in the state of Lincoln. But break, my heart, for I must hold my tongue.

MARY. Who wast thy whiskers, Horry?

RATIO. Who was he, or how was he?

MARY. Name the man, man.

RATIO. Paul Onius.

MARY. Ah! An' is a Full Professor a'ready this semester.

CUTLET. Promoted yet!

RATIO. An' married to the Dean of Student Life, Damsel Section.
Miss Gert Rude.

MARY. I thought she was a dyke. How square can you get.

RATIO. I'm tellingya, that guy's a rectangle. All the way from Nowheresville.

CUTLET. Remember thy Freud.

RATIO. Exactly, cat. I have evidence from the ghost of our former classmate My Cohen, a groovy buster who flunked out of school last half, that Prof Onius did not justly grade us. Our finals were never corrected, nor saw they so much as the eyes of our Professor.

CUTLET. O my prophetic wig!

MARY. Revenge this foul and most unnatural mark.

RATIO. I swear to you cats by my log-log duplex decitreg slide rule never to cease till we're avenged. Believe me, I'm high on this kick and I mean to peg some action on that daddy-o. I remember reading in *Eagle* how ol' Onius goes for a swim in the pool every afternoon to keep his beastly pot-belly from bursting. What say I drown him there, buckoes?

CUTLET. Drown this *--# #!!&%\$!!*** book for me first. (*Hurls it to the ground.*) I jus' don't dig its beat.

RATIO. Well said, ol' mole. O, from this time forth may my words be turned to deeds. Let's *come on*, huh.

MARY. Yours in the ranks of death.

RATIO. That's the wrong play, doll, but I buy the message. Die all, die merrily.

(Exeunt, leaving Cutlet with his Calculus.)

CUTLET. To be or not to be, that is the question. Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer the slings and arrows of this frantic course, or drop it. To drop that jazz an' sleep again. To sleep and dream.

Aye, there's the rub. For if my Psych teach is on the ball, chances are my dreams will bug me worse than Calc. And what of Physics 110 and 111, Chem 12, Bio 17, perchance they will be worse yet. Perchance, hell. They will be! Alas, to continue is sure failure an' minus ten credits yet. (*Falls back.*) O, I am dropped, Ratio. This potent homework quite o'erthrows my spirit, but I do prophesy the passing lights on thee and Mary—B plus and e'en A lights, too.

VOICE FROM ABOVE: Now cracks a noble engineer. Farewell, sweet slide rule, may high grades accompany thee in thy other courses.

During the interval Mac Hamrin waved over his wife's head in the lobby. He came straight across to Hoyd, wearing a satin vest it was almost impossible not to stroke, saying at once, "You've heard the news, I suppose?"

"What now?"

"The President's withdrawn from the Senate race. He's staying on."

"After the CCMCE debacle, I guess. Choosing to sit tight, rather than risk his neck. Well, well. What other changes in the lineup have you for tonight, Mac?"

The habit of gossip was so constitutionally ingrained that Hamrin went straight to the point: "As a matter of fact, there are a few. R. J. C.'s been offered a top job with the Waxman Foundation. You know, educational grants."

"And is taking it, huh?"

"You kidding? That job pays \$40,000 before expenses. Resignation in like a light."

"And not unconnected with the President's decision to remain," mused Hoyd. He thought: Typical. As it happened he had recently heard that the Cadillac Professor had transferred his residence to the Village, finding the new Park Avenue (all that glass) rather common; so the man had moved into a brownstone where the celebrated *vie de quartier* had turned into a *vie de Cartier* and the white-mustached live wire of the Waxman Foundation would now naturally be brought into contact with only the most important persons. The "club" he would keep on,

it was assumed. "Ah me," Hoyd said to the Secretary now, "how you all will miss Mr. Phipps, to be sure."

"But you've heard about Ned?"

"What? Has Teller risen on the third day or something?"

"Hell no. It was like this. Ned's been writing for *The New Yorker*, as you know. No end of a mess. Seems he sent in a student's short story, a term paper sub and a pretty darn good one. Story about staying with some English Earl. Well, they used it all right over Ned's name and now it appears the student himself plagiarized it from an early *Dial* short, back in the twenties. There's all hell to pay."

"So friend Meilberg will be leaving you too."

"Seems inevitable, I guess. The student will of course merely be reprimanded by one of the Deans for 'deviate behavior.' That's what they call snitching these days, it seems. But say, Hoyd, when you leaving?"

"After commencement. Apparently Marlene and I will be on the same boat as that Ivan Vogel and his young wife." Hoyd discussed his move to Israel, a decision everyone he spoke to seemed to envy him. For it was a journey back to life, to an age-old, preordained plan. It filled his heart with so much joy even to talk about it now he changed the subject as soon as he could. "Like you the play, Mac?"

"The jests are getting a bit Pythagorean for me, I fear."

"Me too. Planning to stick it out?"

"Next act or so, at any rate. Funny thing. There's a man came in late, third row center. I've lost him now. But he looks *exactly* like Orrin Bunch. You have a look at him, Hoyd, when the curtain goes up. He went out a side exit a moment ago."

They chatted some more, then with an "I see your point" the Secretary smiled and, lightly throttled by his glasses, pushed off. Hoyd watched him with affection as he made for his seat. A new vest—but the same old wife. Mac was one of the devoted ones, all right. On down the aisle Hoyd hobbled, looking vaguely into the row pointed out. He couldn't see anyone who looked even

faintly like the late Professor B. Anyhow the man would never have been so crazy as to show up at a shindig like this. Not after withdrawing his appeal. Then the hair on Hoyd's nape went into a slow crawl. Orrin Bunch or his passing likeness was walking rapidly in from a curtained exit and wedging his way through to a good seat third row center.

ACT TWO: SCENE ONE

SCENE: *Outside Professor Paul Onius's office. Onius is seen inside conducting a conference with a student. His voice is heard by Horace Ratio and Mary O'Phelia listening outside.*

STUDENT (*inside office*). I'm contemplating shaking out of Math 8, sir, and I wondered whether you agree.

ONIUS. Well, York, I can only tell you what I've told so many others. Neither a borrower nor a lender be; receiving or giving answers on tests can lead to no good. The fellow in the seat beside you may be stupider than you. In short, to thine own self be true. Which means never look up the answer in the back of the book till you've completed the problem properly yourself. If you can continue the course under those conditions, I advise you to swing with it. If not, drop and farewell.

YORK. Thou hast encouraged me greatly, sir. (*Exits, and as he passes Horace and Mary outside, he shakes his head.*) The dirty !!!-# #-¢¢*****!!!\$!

RATIO. Now might 'a do it. Now 'a is a'readin'. And now I'll do it, too. (*Approaches, with T-square raised.*) But no, he's in too good a disposition. He's reading *Hamlet* yet! Doesn't nobody read nothing else aroun' here? Real cool. I'll wait till I can get him in the pool.

MARY. You're a poet and you don't know it. Listen, you drum that sound, Horry? He's destroying those old examination papers.

(*Rending of paper within.*)

RATIO. He's shagged. I'll wager they were never read. Like I said. Goddam this poetry.

ONIUS. (*can be heard dialing his phone and then talking into it*) Registrar's Office, please. Sol? How've you been? Good. Look, Sol, there was a student in one of my last term's classes and frankly I was, ah, worried about the grade I gave him. What's that? On the

contrary, I felt I'd graded him too *high*. Yes, a D minus it should have been. Honestly, Sol, that grade's been bugging me. In other words, I've been deeply concerned as to whether this lad ought to continue here at Lincoln at all. Right. Lower soph. Name of Ratio, Horace. Corny name, eh.

RATIO. What about his? Mary, he's hip. 'A knows 'a have 'a secret.

MARY. Thrice ***!!!# #@ \$\$%& ***!!! villain!

ONIUS. Very good, Sol. Will do. I'll put through a recommendation that Ratio be relegated to Brooklyn.

RATIO. Yeeeks! Get *that*? Mary, this is horrible. I'm busted, chick.

And ditched. I haven't got *time* to be exiled to Brooklyn. Ah God, I hear the voice of Myron Cohen demanding revenge.

ONIUS (*jovially*). Yes, by noon, Sol. Okay. (*He steps out into the passage.*) Hello, Ratio. I've just been having a word with the Registrar about you.

RATIO. Y'have—have ya. Sir.

ONIUS. Yes. (*Glances at his watch.*) I'd like to go over that final you did last term. Maybe you could translate it into English for me sometime. Unfortunately I have to run to the Sports Building if I'm going to get in my swim today.

RATIO (*menacingly*). It's *cool* in that p'ticular spot, Professor. And I mean cold. In fact, I challenge you to a duel there, sir.

ONIUS. Well. That sounds amusing.

RATIO. 100-yard free style O.K. wit' you?

ONIUS. Assuredly. I was collegiate champ for that distance in my day, as it happens. Yale. (*Horace's face darkens at the word.*) And if you don't drown me, Ratio, I promise to reconsider that grade.

(*Exits, followed by Horace Ratio, who throws a meaningful glance at Mary.*)

Hoyd sat it out, and in the subsequent interval limped hastily to Hamrin's aisle, beckoning urgently to the Secretary. Mac sent his woman off to powder and Hoyd went straight to the point.

"Hell, you're right. That's Orrin down there, or the damn closest resemblance I've ever seen." He remembered the drunken vision emerging through that Harlem door, and paused. "At least I feel fairly sure. . . ."

But Hamrin was smiling. "It is Orrin Bunch, my dear Hoyd. I've just checked with Seymour. He passed a note back a moment ago. He came to see the play because, well, Paul Onius is supposed to be based on him."

"But isn't it rather tactless, and very unlike him?"

"No." The Secretary shook his head. "Not at all." Then very carefully, as if talking to a child, he said, "Yesterday morning Orrin Bunch was reinstated by order of Albany."

For a long moment Hoyd said nothing. His eyes seemed to burst from their sockets, his pipe was like a bagpipe. Then slowly his insides started rumbling. He began a long silent chortle. "I get it," he kept on saying, "oh my God, I get it."

"*With full back pay,*" Hamrin added harshly. "Listen, are you going to stay for another shot, by the way? The next Act includes a play within a play, I hear."

"I don't think so, now."

"Following which there is to be a personal appearance of the young lady sponsored by the Society for the Preservation and Care of Callipygians."

"The devil take the hindmost," half-howled Hoyd as with a friendly wave he made, still chortling, off. Hamrin, meanwhile, resumed his seat, folding his storklike legs and wondering how the hell, just how the merry hell, Orrin Bunch had managed it. CCMCE was still in a state of nonexistence, it had been revealed that two members would be charged with "graft" in having allowed a Field Work class in interior engineering fix up their private homes, and so far fifteen appointees to the vacant positions had courteously declined the Mayor's invitation. And now here was Orrin himself walking with buoyant step toward his seat, glancing at his watch and nodding amicably at various students as if nothing had happened. A curious fellow. And of course a most competent one.

Fearful lest being walkers in the city was becoming a cliché, Stanley Schochet and Carol Lester had turned into a Block's

Drugs on the "Upper East Side." After their escapade in the snow Ira and Stanley and George Liemen had been called before the Dean of Students, Male. Under a sign saying WATCH YOUR LANGUAGE Dean Grudin had lectured them at terrible length and finally let them off with an imposition—and for a Lincoln engineer what an impo!—each to write a two-thousand-word account of that night on the tiles, to be submitted to his office by end of term.

Stanley had tried to persuade Carol to write his, but this was something she proved unable to do. She was now rereading his own effort prior to its submission. Meanwhile the result of the outing on Ira had been strange. No longer the shy house-painter's son, Ira had turned in his bifocals for a pair of contacts and purchased a floral prayer cap. There was no stopping him with the coeds now. He was going to work in a brewery for the summer, attracted by the job's requiring a knowledge of zymurgy, the chemical process Stan liked best since it was the last word in Webster's. What a recommendation!

Stanley stared into the street while his girl friend read. Among the welter of stickers announcing *Sin Pronto* furniture suites and *Trabajo de Colision* auto services (surely high in demand) he saw a theater:

HOY EN PERSONA J DE N
VIDA PASION Y MUERTE DE
LA DE DINAMARCA.

He looked at Carol. Gray-haired, fuchsia-lipped this evening, she had foregone her usual eccentricities of dress, with the exception of the fly-fronted frontier pants and tubular holder for her Gold Flake behind one ear. She had ceased to put on her nylons back to front. These days, however, she wore only *one* stocking, and that with a rim of rhinestones down the back. How Stanley admired these cunning refusals to conform to the customary assumptions concerning feminine adornment. He had noticed the three nails in her hair with real delight. Maybe he could persuade Carol to wear nose jewelry yet.

Suddenly she had an uncompleted motion of tipping back her glasses, nodded, reached into her handbag for a penny, tossed it over her head behind her. "It's good," she said.

"Y'like it?" Stan tried not to show his pleasure.

"It's a very beautiful piece, Stanley."

"You really think so?"

"It's as good as the play. And that's saying *a lot*."

"Let's walk a little, what say?" After a minute he added, "George acted good, huh."

They strolled the overcrowded streets. He no longer felt people were laughing at him, at his small feet. It was a warm evening and the kites were up already, getting entangled in washing lines and antennae, while poultry pecked in and out of these storefront flats.

You resist, though, all the same; you find it difficult to dislike your own substance; you long to stop it all and be able to think about it and hear your heart beating clearly within you; but now it's impossible. It can't stop. Disaster is in this unfortunate steel trap, and we, we're spinning round in it with the machines, and with the earth itself. All one great whirling thing. And a thousand little wheels, and hammers never falling at one time, their thunders crowding one against the other. . . .

"Too bad Céline turned out to be a Fascist."

"You enjoy that book, Stan?"

He didn't answer. Past Juanita's Dime Store, past TROPICAL FISH CANARIES, past Groceria de Los Pobres, past Fast-Luck Incense with a pinup on its cover, past Brazilian Dental Laboratory (1-HR SERVICE!). . . .

"Say!" he exclaimed suddenly, stopping by a poster for a Congressman called Patsy Pagano (who thus hit all his constituents, spick and mick, "at a blow"). Stanley touched the side of his face on which a thin beard was growing, for he now shaved only on one side. "Hey, have you heard anything more about your *script*, for heaven's sake?"

Carol shook her head. She looked a very glum pre-Raphaelite

bosh-shot indeed. "They *said* they'd let me know. It's a good firm. I dunno."

"Yeah," he said scornfully, "they published *I Was Jacqueline Kennedy's Dressmaker*, didn't they?"

He was beginning to feel happy, however. That he knew. **SLAVE TRADERS NAKED IN SUN—FURY IN FLAMING EASTMANCOLOR!** They were so utterly in harmony tonight, Carol so different from any girl he'd known, especially all those would-be Bronx mommas on the campus, surreptitiously stashing Bermudas in their gym lockers. Maybe tonight, maybe. . . .

He'd *nearly* asked Carol to marry him a week ago when they'd gone to see that film played backwards. Together they'd watched it in unexpressed ecstasy. This was what they wanted of their universe, their glory in the flower. Water gushed upwards to its spring. A shot puffed cosily back into its barrel. A racquet swallowed its scut of ball. One bud resought the tender shelter of its branch. Tears had shamed Stanley at those visions, infuriating evidence of a biological necessity. And here, in this melting pot of the city, was an amazing dream ("Can 4-Legged Girl's Marriage Succeed?"), an evocation of—yes, he saw it again:

RODRIGUEZ Y SU TRIO
2 NITE J SUS D NAZ R TH
EL "CLOUD JUGGLER"

"How much?" he asked the man at the door of the theater.

"Two dollars a buck." The manager was in dun fedora and shoes of perforated suede—he had omitted to put on socks. Stanley studied this side-burned jake with intensity.

The show was amazing, a deafeningly zealous vaudeville, all Apache dancers from Puerto Rico, diamanté pianos, a girl sliced into three pieces, tightwire walkers from the "Yucatàn," Shangri-La Debs and a Fu Manchu Crime Museum on the stage as well. He was inebriated with delight. Next year's model could *never* be better than this. When finally they staggered out, ear-drums battered, onto the deprived sidewalk, Stanley turned for

his girl—only to find Carol complaining to the manager that they hadn't seen Jesus Christ.

"Aw, go buy a hoop, lady."

"You'll do better in a hat," cried Stanley, laughing. "A great day for the race."

The manager loomed. "You got money, kid?"

"I got plentya dandruff."

"What race is this, feller?"

"The human race."

And so they strolled inconsequentially onwards, past the *discos* and *PASAJES* signs, the apocalyptic spiritualist stores and the quick-drive lesson establishments, ramblers without cylinder blocks as it were, pacing through the streets like a pair of enemy infantry. Only after fifteen blocks did Stanley turn aside his head and say, as with a mortal disgust, "Well, we *could* get married, I guess."

And after another ten Carol answered him, staring into the cape-black sky above, "If only it weren't so dreadfully Mickey-Mouse. And sort of fried-shoes thing to do." So they strolled silently on, cherishing their eccentricities.

Meanwhile, over in Raymond's, Eddie Drosa was nursing his espresso and watching Geneva give her final performance on the floor.

It was an effort worthy of the "paddle" satellite sent up that very day. Every now and then she would jam all rose-white into the spot, ebullient buttocks and brazen beads, the next moment she would be proffering a howling tableload of expense-accounters the salads of her shoulders.

All this Apollonian activity left Eddie cold. He coursed a palm through his mop of hair, wondered where she would lug him tonight, in search of sensation, and "the most." He thanked the Lord of Hosts ("mighty in battle") they were getting married soon. For this had ceased to be a love affair, it was practically Grand Opera yet.

Two nights ago in the convertible again (top down, Yankees versus Kansas City on the throbbering air). A week before that on a fire-escape stair. In a tub filled with live fish (all pike and eels —ugh!). So it went. Eddie remembered Golda Jean with a groan, at least that Wisconsin miss wouldn't have had the brass to tell him he looked different—"somehow"—from Michelangelo's David. No, the only way to save his prostate was to get spliced. Eddie rolled his head at the anguish of the moon-rocket ordeal coming up. Jesus, but you had to be a grease monkey to satisfy Sue Libermann in bed.

A sheen of beads, one spasmic trounce, and off she stomped. To hideous applause.

So they had arranged it for three weeks' time, at the bride's request, the very day that Semele—complete with chipmunks—was to be fired at the moon. BOOM-BAZOOM!! Whatta girl! Of all the crazy commotions. Trouble was, he hadn't told his mother. Nope. He dreaded doing it, frankly. Dozens of times this past week in the little apartment he had summoned up his courage, only to fade, at the last moment, at the finish.

Though she thought the Semele kick absolutely screwball, and completely a panic, his sister Illona had agreed to be bridesmaid, had kept the secret, and insisted Eddie should tell their parents himself. Idly Eddie wondered if Sue's sleep habits would be anything like those of the new Illona, now she was majoring in Math—sleep-cap, eye-mask, ear-stopples, night-gloves, elbow-bands, curlers, probably a sleep-bra and slippery as all get-out with Vita cream. The *elusive* female, hah! Here she came already. Out with the Spanish dictionary now.

By chance Geneva was in a relaxed mood this night. The can-comp runner-up ("Miss Bread of the World" she had been voted) merely ordered a Bathsheba cocktail—"bien caliente"—and took off her shoes and rested her feet on a chair. "That a bull-fighting scar?" the waiter inquired of the tattoo mark on her instep.

She was genuinely proud of Eddie's close-on-A average for the

year's work, happy at the prospect of a summer in the country at the Napoleon Plaza in Maine, a big Bratt hotel (color TV in every room) at which an English whiskers who was going to Israel had secured her affianced a job, and above all she was pleased as punch they were *getting married* shortly. Now as she learned that Eddie had finally decided to make the long-postponed plunge and tell his mother, she let him go at once. Off-forth on Melody, then.

"*Haymma!*" he called as he entered his "house" some minutes later. "I'm getting married. And to a brand-new kind of female yet."

"That's nice," said Mrs. Drosa equably, watching her *singi* frying in the kitchen. "Such girls you should marry every day, my Ed."

"... these sheltered halls, filled with eager faces. . . ."

The Lincoln College Commencement had been rained out. Two unsuccessful attempts to secure indoor accommodation—one for the Bronx Armory, one for Grant's Tomb (the worst of both worlds, you might say)—had failed. At the last minute, in the hot drizzle, perspiring Marshals had somehow managed to unlock the many doors leading to the Indoor Stadium, under the Sports Building, and to cram the majority of the graduating class into it. The gowned students had gone in in a rush, munching their Campus Jumbo Burgers, drinking from bottles of Blite and calling out to comrades in the throng.

"... confidence of youth, and rejecting those fears and uncertainties. . . ."

It was abominably hot. Gravely had the faculty "processed" through the service entrance at the back, or front, of the Stadium in line of seniority. Or, as Axel put it to his neighbor Roman Gladberg, in order of tax brackets. Beads of sweat trickled through the limpening bandage of Axel's tasseled cap, as they stood in the Fencing Section.

Absolutely stone deaf owing to the fact that his wettened hear-

ing-aid was on the blink, the President had opened with a paracletian peroration replete with senescent *longueurs*. It had gone on and on and on and on and, the major part of the faculty being compelled to take it standing, the atmosphere had become as filled with sighs as Dante's hell. Finally, some astute member of the Maintenance Department had let off a starting pistol in rear of the rickety stage and sure enough, as if he had suddenly solved a problem, the President desisted. He had, in fact, just been given his thirty-first honorary degree, S.M. (Chic.), an especially gratifying honor since nobody in the city administration had the foggiest clue to what it meant. He sat down on, or collapsed into, his high-backed chair amid lusty tramplings from the students.

“. . . I say to you that competition, that great backbone of a vital. . . .”

Charles Laughton, Steve Reeves, and Dr. Joyce Brothers having all been regretfully unable to deliver the Commencement address, this was presently being administered by a curatical city official from San Francisco, an individual of pitifully narrow build and bulbous eyes, who was now orating about the “dangers and threats” involved in the “priceless heritage of full debate.” Trying to squat slightly on a hurdle behind him Harvey Spiller, who was to teach Creative Kentuckians this summer, passed a furtive note to Hoyd—“*There seems to be no part of knowledge in fewer hands than that of discerning when to have done.*” Jacketless under his borrowed gown, which made him look more as if he'd come out of a Mixmaster than ever, and wearing sandals over shoes, Hoyd Rushzak wrote back, “God bless Swift!” In front was a small but wary fairy contingent, all ready for summers off with tan oils and Equanil prescriptions, and even whispers were inadvisable in such proximity.

“. . . proudly boast, as you pass through life's storms, that no threats of small-minded men. . . .”

The absurdity was that the whole performance was taking place while still no City Council for Municipal College Education ex-

isted at all. More and more charges were being "bared" concerning graft on the part of this or that official, and no one wanted to step into such muddy shoes yet awhile, at least.

" . . . strive constantly for those high ideals, taught beneath these storied ways. . . ."

The speaker droned on. At the back Axel took a clipping from his pocket. The admission of an Atomic Energy Commission official concerning the certain cases of bone cancer and leukemia from strontium 90 until the year 2029. Every single year. He stared above the sea of heads. How many of these? The rapid status rise planned by the more ambitious of these graduates carried, he knew, its penalties; it involved a social upheaval that destroyed the mechanism whereby one generation communicated its values to the next. This did not merely mean that a given generation repudiated the beliefs of their parents, it meant that they themselves were curiously isolated by lack of conviction in the inheritable quality of their own values. In short, they wouldn't know their brochis from. . . .

" . . . your dedicated teachers, men who, raised above Mammon's lure, have so unstintedly. . . ."

Under a large sign saying 9TH. LAP, Mesrob Mins listened with clenched scowl. This angry old man seemed entirely to have forgotten the fuss he had created; mollified by an acceptance from *Sewanee* he was concentrating on rewriting the college catalog during his summer in Cambodia.

" . . . not to let others stand in your way. . . ."

One figure, squudged between a time clock and the pole vault, remained cool in appearance, stolid, calm, with folded claws and friendly eyes. Absently he perused the ranks for absent friends: Ned Meilberg, in the doghouse; Digger Davies, dead; Sigmund —dear vaguely-trousered Sigmund—was by now on his way to Dublin for his Ford, to enjoy his Bloomsday, trace the *Brut-y-Tywysogion* in the *Wake*, finish his Ph.D., astonish the reviewers of the learned journals, and so get tenure.

As the speaker persisted in continuing, Seymour Katzman

strode to recollect, for future information and/or action, how he had disposed his teaching assignments for the fall, whom he had deluged with dirty work, whom he had spared. He had not spared that overgrown dormouse a few rows in front of him, Enoch "Appius" Hill. It was as well to keep one's enemies in mind. As the saying went, *You can't beat City Hall.*

" . . . succeed . . . up and up . . . higher and. . . ."

This summer Seymour contemplated getting on with his Dictionary, straightening out Avery a little (thank God she had destroyed that letter) and possibly, if he could afford it, purchasing the genuine Boer War Lee-Enfield he had had his eye on for a while. But there would be so much else to do, syllabi to revise, reading lists to compile, new appointees, mainly refugees from the Coast, to see. If taken on, each would have to sign loyalty oaths to the State of New York *and* the City of New York. To overthrow the one without the other might make what *The New Yorker* liked to call the neatest trick of the week. And all for what?—the new 80-page study of the Carnegie Institute of Higher Education, entitled *The Liberal Arts as Viewed by Faculty Members in Professional Schools*, had made it abundantly plain that the professional schools had a rigorous contempt for artistic subjects.

" . . . higher . . . and . . . higher. . . ."

Katzman's face converted itself into the requisite stony mask. Punching at the roof the commencement speaker was flinging out his final stirring words.

" . . . to the top!"

Having solved their scientific puzzles for four years, the students were about to graduate. The degrees were actually awarded with a dispatch worthy of the 220-yard dash in the ellipse of which most of the graduating class were enclosed. They rose. A laughably undenominational prayer. Then *Gaudeteamus Igitur* was sung and, still bellowing, the students began to move briskly for the exits. These were mainly controlled by turnstiles so that the Stadium was once again converted into chaos. Some

joker sounded a starting cannon. Smoke billowed over the arena. The band played. They all sang.

“But here’s a little thought
That will get you on the go. . . .”

“How the hell we get outa here?” said a voice nearby.

“What a mess.”

“Ach, whatja expect from a shitty college?”

Katzman crouched his eyes. He was watching these immense novices with overmuch affection. The trombone of the city orchestra brayed, the basses thudded. Marshals were trying to bawl out information. The students milled and moiled, tearing off their hired gowns so as to get as fast as possible to the jobs awaiting them in the sweaty metropolis outside. Yes, the YES (Youth Employment Service) offices would be busy on the morrow. Seymour had never known he had such abstract love within him; it was the more powerful for his ignorance of it. He twitched angrily at his pince-nez, ducking his head in the scrum of students and colleagues.

He was rather breathless and in his ears there seemed to sound the drumbeats of history, as they quickened the element of oasis which these few poor tenements of the intellect, ziggurats of the West, represented today. Was the diabolic flame only to be guarded, then, by such despised and solitary shadows—these frail figures of the academe, hated hyperideans, who in a parody of tragic exodus now pushed so absurdly out the entrance marked **SERVICE**? He tried to screen his thoughts, concentrating on the memory of all those card indexes waiting for him like a pack of hounds at home.

Seymour Katzman shoved into the hooting furnace of the street through a subterranean passage pasted with old sports schedules and notices like *No Hammer Toss Outside Stadium*. It had stopped raining. There was only a steamy heat. His wife was waiting for him as arranged, he could see, under the distant

arch. The sudden familiarity of her always worried face touched at another heartstring. How to get over there was the problem. Maybe it'd be best to walk all the way round the Stadium building to the far side. He began to roll a cigarette but his papers proved too humid. It was at that moment, staring at a wall where had been scribbled Prince-Speedo-Clarisa, that Seymour Katzman did something ridiculous. He had a piece of chalk in one pocket and he now took this out and hastily, scribbled also on the wall—THANK GOD FOR THE STUDENTS!

Such was their spindrift Eden, after all, and Time the angel with the flaming sword. He had barely indulged the most unusual gesture, however, when he heard a voice saluting him. Flushing, he looked up, saw the distinguished figure of Orrin Bunch.

"Ah, Orrin," he said impassively. "Good to see you back." The two hadn't met since the start of academic year. "Rather a crush."

Dr. Bunch gave the faintest of faint pained smiles. "Quicker this way, Sey. Let's move, shall we. Make the run, as I believe they say." And he led the way around the Stadium.

It was a hot pace and Katzman found it hard to keep up, especially jostling through the crowds as they had to. Had Orrin seen him writing? Mentally he scurried through the implications, if he had.

"May I say," he ventured as they topped an incline, "how very glad I was to hear about your reinstatement."

"Thank you," gravely replied Professor Bunch. "It has been an unpleasant period. And a busy one."

"You will find that next term . . ."

"I am already acquainted with my program, Seymour, and believe me, I'm grateful."

A guard tried to bar their path, but Orrin Bunch flashed something at the man and he wavered—fatally.

"We can cut over the moat this way, you'll find. There's a tractor on my usual parking space." They strode more calmly on.

"No, no, I don't need a ride, Orrin," Katzman said. "I was just

wondering, well, if you'll be taking your usual summer off in Europe."

"Yes, indeed." The well-set professor looked round in surprise. He made a movement of his shoulders as a student's apple-core struck him lightly. "Oh yes, indeed. Wednesday twenty-three. Two oh oh three. That's *on the field*. At the terminal," he glanced at the wafer of gold on his wrist, "why, I'd have to be there a good hour beforehand."

"Evidently," said Katzman quietly, "there were some amazing revelations. Right to the Mayor."

Dr. Bunch nodded. "Some even say—to the Governor."

"Then, have a good summer, old chap. Somehow I don't think you'll miss your plane, if that's what's bothering you."

"Always better to be safe than sorry," said Professor Orrin Bunch.

They had reached his well-parked car. A boy was watching the Olds for the doctor, who tipped the kid expansively.

"Say, *thanks*."

Katzman was hesitating. "You see, Orrin," he said in a studiedly noncommittal manner, "what I'd like to say is—and don't get me wrong—well, frankly I'd like to congratulate you."

Dr. Bunch was standing with one hand on the door, a tolerant, almost serenely indulgent smile playing at his mouth. "Takes one to know one," he said crisply. "It was a long haul, eh. All those delays. And I don't mind telling you, Sey, it led me into some damn odd joints. Up in Harlem, for instance. And then there was a nightspot called Raymond's where I did a little *re*-search. You know, some of the stuff that went on there was pretty damn *near the knuckle!*"

"I can imagine it was." And Katzman sheathed his eyes. "Well, goodby, Orrin. Have a splendid summer."

"You too. Much luck in the ritual lustrum there." And humming to himself, the learned doctor stepped in his car and shut the door with a costly click. Before starting up he reached for a notebook in the glove compartment and wrote in it—*Break the*

Pattern. The last words, or rather numbers, he was heard to utter were: "Two oh oh three, on the dot." And then he had driven off.

MLS . . . Students crowding and greeting each other moving to

1. —cars honking through—sneak rides on hoods—the drivers curse—parents, girls—CAMERA PANS RIGHT—

GROUP OF STUDENTS

.... It's certainly not for us
And you have really got a right
To be a gloomy Gus. . . .

LS . . . they wave and ad lib indiscriminately into the CAMERA

.... someone turns a car radio up . . .

VOICE FROM RADIO

Now don't forget, folks, this is the magic number with a smile. That's right, and here from the TNTC newsroom we're returning you to our on-the-spot reporter, Abe Andrews, right inside the control room just about to get the signal on Semele.

VOICE OF ABE

As I was saying to Ham, folks, this seems to me one of the most glorious moments in our history. I can't describe, well, I only wish I could clue you in, I mean, on all these wonderful buttons and gadgets. And, uh, handles and fuses. *There goes Werner now!* I wish I could get him to the mike. Hi, Wer-ner? He looks worried. Yes, I think he's just said something about the count-down. Of course, those of you listeners with TV sets got a cross-section of Semele in color, the greatest scientific object ever built, it's truly a wonderful moment, a moment of great destiny, with Yin and Yang strapped in the navigation room, just over the tubes, and oh, those of you with sets will of course be the very first humans ever to get a close-up of the surface of the moon. . . .

STUDENT

For what purpose?

SECOND STUDENT

Yeah. How we know they even got a bagel stand up there. I'm starving yet.

VOICE OF ABE

Folks, I can't describe . . . I can't tell . . . the dedication, uplifted purpose, the drive, oh this is going to be a real wild gig out here when the first signals come in from the moon . . . 'course, as you all know, any interceptor missiles will simply be blown off the face of the earth, I mean of outer space, the moon itself . . . now here's Werner got his headphones on, he's looking puzzled . . .

LS . . . During the detonation the superimposed pictures of the singing students Dissolve In and Out . . .

"Our really great race with the Soviet Union is in education. The nation that wins this race will be the potentially dominant power. Unless we in the United States can solve our educational problems, we will have difficulty in solving other problems . . . it seems to me that we in the United States who are so blessed with natural resources and have such a high standard of living certainly should be able to give the same emphasis to education that they do."

Vice-Admiral Hyman G. Rickover, after a recent visit to the Soviet Union and Poland.

STUDENTS

Oh this joint is really for the birds
It's certainly not for us.

four . . .

three . . .

two . . .

one . . .

FADE OUT:

New York.

Anno Bomini, 1963.

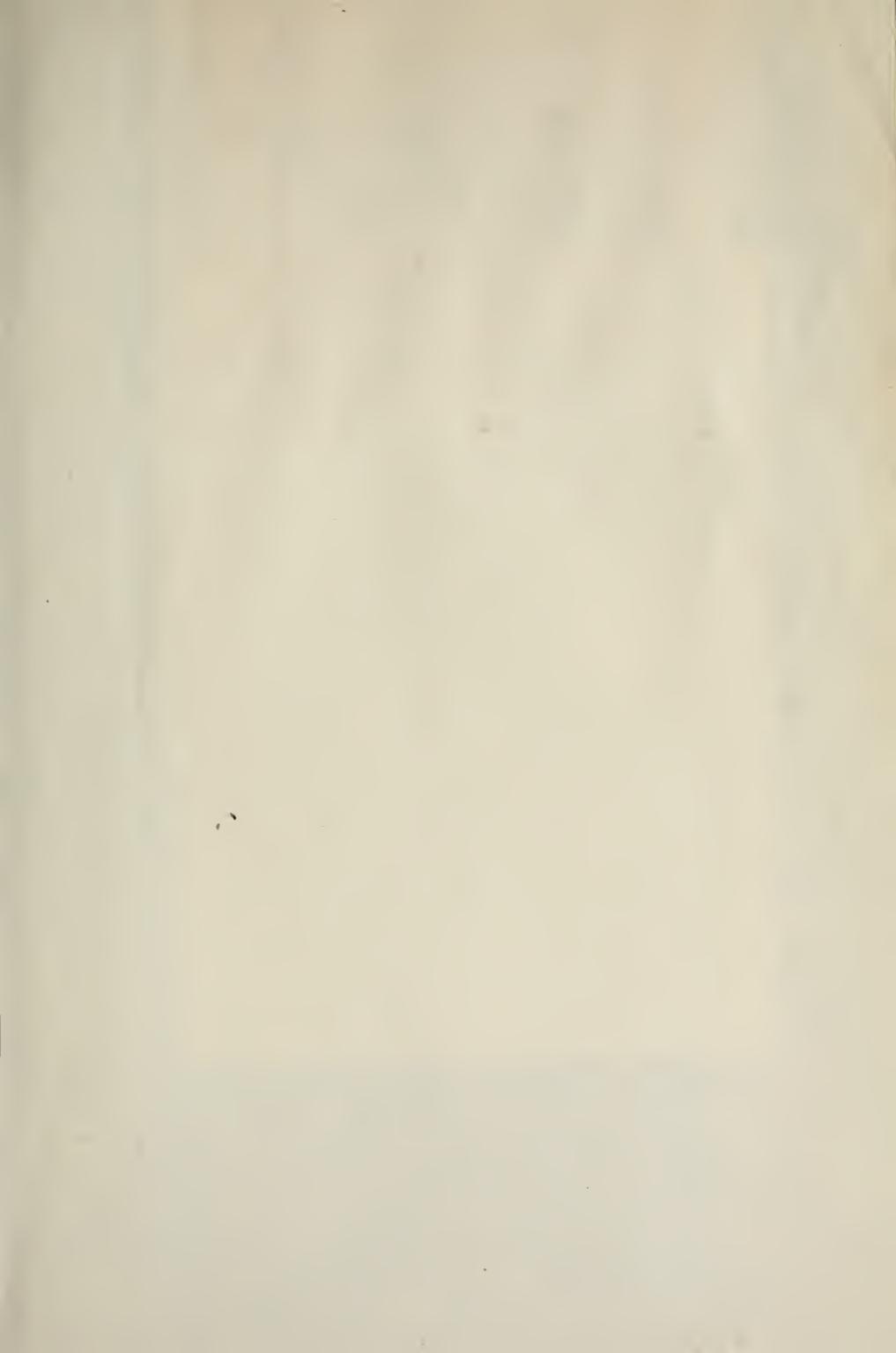
SHANTI

About the Author

GEOFFREY WAGNER is the author of over twenty books, including translations of Baudelaire, Nerval, Kessel, and other French writers. He has contributed to scholarly journals, run his own radio program in New York, written articles for *Collier's Encyclopedia*, acted as U.S. correspondent for *Books and Bookmen* in London, and revised textbooks, as well as authoring paperback originals, historical fiction, travel books and brochures, and several slim volumes of unread, esoteric verse.

His celebrated attack on popular culture in this country, *Parade of Pleasure*, aroused wide comment, including articles ranging from London's *Daily Mirror* tabloid to *Encounter* (to, in Holland, the highbrow *Literair Paspoort*). In 1956 it was followed by *The Dispossessed*, a novel chosen as "Book of the Year" in the Chicago *Sunday Tribune*; the same choice was made by Angus Wilson in *The Observer* for *Wyndham Lewis* in 1957, while in 1958 Reginald Reynolds of *The New Statesman* similarly selected *Rage on the Bar*, an anticolonialist satire set in the Caribbean. In 1961 Ian Fleming picked a Wagner war novel *Season of Assassins* (purchased later by Hollywood) as one of his "Thrillers of the Year" in the British *Sunday Times*.

Dr. Wagner was graduated from Oxford, took his Ph.D. at Columbia; is currently engaged on a commissioned study of Aldous Huxley.



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